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December 1999

Issue 03

dreamcast

128-BIT TECHNOLOGY • ONLINE GAMING • MONTHLY

SOUTH PARK

exclusive

Tree huggin' hippy crap?



SOUL CALIBUR Prepare for the
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5

UEFA STRIKER
DREAMCASTS



REVIEWED
THIS ISSUE:

Aero Wings • Buggy Heat • Chef's Luv Shack • Dynamite Cap • F1 World GP
Hydro Thunder • Jimmy White's 2: Cueball • Marvel Vs Capcom • Pen Pen
Ready 2 Rumble Boxing • Sega Get Bass • Soul Calibur • Soul Fighter
Street Fighter Alpha 3 • Suzuki Alstare Racing • Tokyo Highway Challenge

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12

Luxuries:

1 Bread

2 Water

3 Air

Essentials:

1.



2.



3.



Life is about priorities. Dreamcast, the world's most powerful games console, is here.

So are 3 of the finest software titles ever created. Sonic Adventure, Sega Rally 2 and SoulCalibur are just part of a strapping software line-up, with new games released every week. Turn off your heating. Have your stomach stapled. Play on your Dreamcast.

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Dreamcast

Up to 6 billion players

www.dreamcast-europe.com

Dreamarena

highlights

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SOUTH PARK SHOWCASE

We're going down to South Park and we're gonna' have ourselves a time! Chet's Luv Shack and South Park Rally are under the microscope in this month's Showcase.



INTERVIEW

Jimmy White bares all about life, love and never winning the World Championship (oh, and Jimmy White's 2: Cueball) **24**

Bio Ware's Greg Zeschuk talks openly about MDK 2, the Dreamcast and Shiny Entertainment. **48**

Criterion Studios talk bikes **82** and

Archer Maclean spills the beans on Jimmy White's 2: Cueball. **80**



Another month and another Dreamcast Monthly. Well, that's not entirely true... Thanks to the Dreamcast being delayed last month our plans for our first four issues kind of went up the swanny. You might have noticed that we've actually been more like six-weekly than monthly of late, but that's all about to change. Anyway, it means that this month we've got more games and more quality features, as well as a bit of a new look.

As you'll see in Newscast (Page 8), the Dreamcast has been doing some top-notch business across Europe managing to clock up a staggering 100,000 sales in its first few days. This should stand to prove that the Dreamcast is much more than just a stop-gap machine between Sony's hardware, which incidentally, is looking a little disappointing to say the least at the moment.

You don't need me to tell you that Christmas is just a stones throw away now, but I think you should know that our Christmas issue (on the Shelves 16th December) should be right at the top of your Christmas list. It's going to be a good old fashioned bumper chrimbo ish, including a huge 212 page solutions book, bigger competitions than ever before as well as all the games you'll be buying in the new year.

Forget about all that Christmas stuff for now though, and enjoy the mag.

Russell Barnes
Editor DCM

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December 1999

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MDK 2



DEEP FIGHTER

Explosive underwater warfare



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LOADING

A brand-new quality feature from Dreamcast Monthly! Every month we'll send out some of the UK's top games journo hacks to see some of the best up-and-coming games. Simple, effective and very much in-depth. Enjoy...

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Where the frapping turns to fluffing...

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THE TRUTH IS IN HERE!



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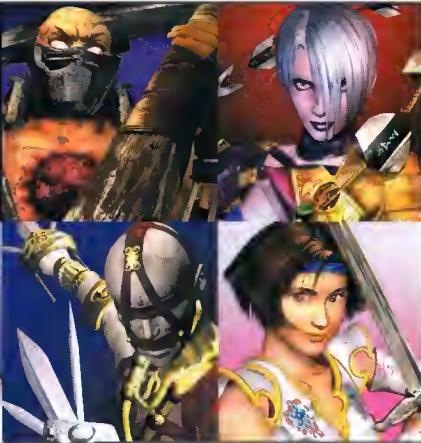
You want the truth about Dreamcast (from some of the industry's biggest players)? You can't handle the truth!

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SHENMUE

It might be suffering from slipping release dates, but *Shenmue* is looking to be well worth the wait.



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HAVE YOUR SAY...



A QUESTION FOR A QUESTION...

PIRATE'S DREAM?

What has Sega done about the piracy problem that plagues the PlayStation? In Forum, Issue 2, you mentioned that it would soon be possible to play import games on a UK Dreamcast and vice versa using a modified VMU. Surely, then, it'll be possible to play copied games in the same vein? It was a long time before people started pirating games on the PSX; why has it happened so quickly here - is there anything you can say to ease my fears?

Darren Hanlow, Leeds

DCM: There are many things that Sega has done to protect the Dreamcast from the curse of piracy. For a start, the 'GD's used are different to normal CDs used for PlayStation and audio. GD-ROMs have a much higher capacity (1 gigabyte) and Sega is the only company

in the world that has them printed. In other words, it's not possible to copy information from a GD-ROM to a normal CD as yet. I'm sure there will be a way soon enough, but that's just the way it goes. The good guys do one thing, then the bad guys do it better and so on. Even the pre-release CDs we get here at DCM have a clever copy protection device on them (no, we're not going to tell you how it works!), so don't worry too much.

That's the most interesting letter (well serious one anyway) we've had this issue so we're going to give you one of these rather sexy Sound Stations courtesy of Logic 3. You've got to work for your prize though Darren, so you've got to answer this reasonably easy question before we'll send it on to you...

How many megabytes are there in a gigabyte?

Drop us an e-mail or simply send it in on a postcard and it's all yours.

DON'T HAVE A COW MAN!

Dear crap Dreamcast magazine,

We were down the shops the other day looking for a quality PlayStation or N64 magazine when we found one and bought it [those winter evenings must just fly by... Ed]. Our cash was well spent as Official PlayStation and N64 magazines are 'quality', a term that you are apparently divorced from, and along with 'reality' and the 'truth', the absence of these terms renders your magazine [will this disjointed sentence never end? Ed] even worse than the graphics of that overpriced 3***** child of a console.

After we had shopped for our quality magazines, we began looking for the last item on our shopping list, a four pack of Andrex toilet tissue. Luckily for us we spied your new magazine, not only did this save us the walk over to the other side of the shop, but it also deserved what was coming to it.

As soon as PlayStation 2 and N2000 get over here your magazine won't be the only new

WORLD SHALL RISE UP AGAINST SEGA AND ITS SECOND RATE ENTERTAINMENT. TODAY WE START THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE! [oh dear... Ed] THIS IS OUR GIANT COW AND IF YOU DON'T DO AS WE SAY AND PRINT THIS LETTER HE WILL CONSUME THIS WORLD AND ALL WHO DWELLETH ON IT! PS. Could you please make the pages easier to tear out as when in a hurry the last thing anyone wants is a tug of war on the loo!

Mr Black and Mr Pink

DCM: Hmm, thanks for your truly inspired words of wisdom. However, there are a few inaccuracies in your letter, and I feel it's my duty to point these out to you. Firstly, the Saturn doesn't actually have a similar processing power to that of a brick. You might find this hard to believe, but the technical specifications of the PlayStation and Saturn are surprisingly similar. How could you otherwise possibly account for Virtua Fighter 2 and Sega Rally, both of which whooped the ass of anything that the PlayStation could muster? Over the five

|| SEGA HAS DONE MANY THINGS TO PROTECT THE DREAMCAST FROM THE CURSE OF PIRACY ||

nifty toilet convenience in town, along with that cheap [hang on, I thought it was overpriced a minute ago? Ed] plastic box Sega will have it made in the convenience department. Everyone remembers the Saturn, which was the ultimate gaming machine, aside from one crucial floor... IT HAD THE PROCESSING POWER OF A BRICK. Sega has tricked the world before, we're not prepared to give them a second chance to steal our money. LED BY US THE PEOPLE OF THE

years the PlayStation has been around, programmers and developers have found many ways to utilise the full potential of the machine (Gran Turismo for example utilised 75 per cent of the machine's potential). Just imagine for a second (if indeed you are at all capable) that the Saturn was still being developed for today. Don't you think that those games too would surpass Sega Rally and Virtua Fighter 2?

Secondly, your confusion over whether or not the Dreamcast is cheap and nasty or 'overpriced', as you also put it, dumbfonnds

NOW LOADING...

Firstly, my TV is about five years old with only an aerial input socket. Could you please tell me what leads I need (if any) to run a Dreamcast. Secondly, I've been told that the Dreamcast takes longer (a lot longer) to load than the PlayStation and always jerks during gameplay. Is this true?

Joey, Manchester

us. Surely, a decent PC in a small, sexy box and fully Internet ready for 200 quid isn't overpriced? Have you any idea how expensive the PlayStation 2 is going to be EXCLUDING Internet compatibility? We're talking at least 350 quid and then another fifty quid at least a year later just to get connected! The words 'rip' and 'off' spring to mind...

Anyway, thanks for your 'interesting' picture of a cow. I don't suppose that was created using a PS2 development kit now was it?

DOH!

How's it going you Sega-loving people? I would just like to point out that due to the fact the Dreamcast is being released so early, Sony is once again going to get a good look at the quality and tech specs, thus allowing the company to upgrade their system to urinate all over it. Also, look at the producers of the top games. Take *Jump Runner*, for example. Who is Simis? When you look at the original PlayStation game developers such as Capcom and Namco and you realise their potential in game quality with games like the *Res Evil* and

DCM: The leads that come with the Dreamcast will work fine with your TV, so there's no need to worry. Secondly, the Dreamcast doesn't take longer to load and it most certainly doesn't 'jerk'. I think you'll find it's quite the opposite way round - it's the PSX that suffers those bugbears. Have more faith in the Dreamcast!



Ridge Racer series, you have to wonder about the quality of Sega's games.

PS: I hope the Dreamcast is waterproof!

Chip Smith (PlayStation fans)

DCM: Oh Dear... There are several factors that you're failed to take into consideration. Sony probably knew the Dreamcast's specs (or at least had a damn good idea) before the information was even released by Sega. They don't have to wait until a machine is released to find out! In the year between the Dreamcast being launched and the PSX 2 coming of age, Sega has a great opportunity to create a massive user base (most of which being past PSX players). Don't forget the Dreamcast is Internet ready at only £200 too. Find out why in our reply to the letter 'Don't have a cow man'.

Capcom and Namco are both making games for Dreamcast

- Sam Calibrn

ring a bell? What about *Marvel Versus Capcom*, *Resident Evil: Code Veronica* and *Res Evil 2*? They're all coming to the Dreamcast very soon and it's obvious they're going to leave the ageing PlayStation looking somewhat worse for wear. Thank you and goodnight...

2D OR NOT 2D?

What's the bloody point of creating 2D games like *Marvel Versus Capcom* on a console capable of 3 million polygons per second? Why not produce more games that use the Dreamcast's awesome potential

like Soul Calibur and

Virtua Fighter 3b. Don't get me wrong, Sega rules, but it needs to get rid of these 2D fever never-gonna-get-anywhere crud games and bring on Shenmue and *Dead or Alive 2!*

Jason, Bristol

DCM: There's no doubt that you've got a point there Jason, but what you've got to remember is that companies like Capcom (*Street Fighter Alpha 3*, *Marvel Versus Capcom*) wouldn't make 2D fighters if nobody wanted them. It's simply because there is a huge demand for these games that the sequels keep on coming. You've got to admit, *Marvel versus Capcom* is pretty smart. *Dead or Alive 2* is near the top of my wish list too, however!

How many games are going to be on the Dreamcast by Christmas?

A: A definite answer regarding this is seemingly straightforward question: Should a Dreamcast mouse suddenly appear (which it damn well should), the prospect of playing games with the keyboard and mouse in tandem is painlessly exciting. Playing *Half-Life* online using this control method would certainly seal the Dreamcast's fate as the greatest gameplaying tool ever to exist. Unfortunately, speculation is all we can provide...

This month's most frequently asked questions answered...

Will *Tomb Raider 2 & The Last Revelation* be out on the Dreamcast?

With PC games being so easy to port to Dreamcast, it would be logical to think that games like *Tomb Raider* would be well worth the port. Bearing in mind that *Sonic and Elder* certainly contracted from almost

Sega, this does seem very hard to pin down to

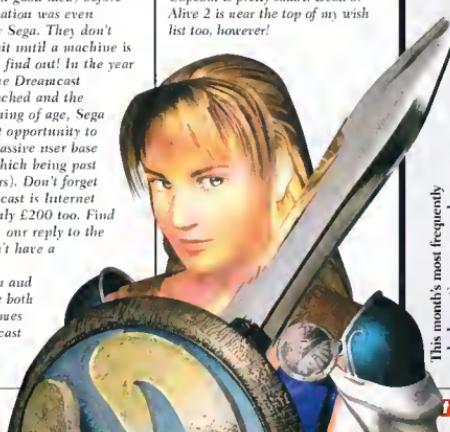
Lara's Last Revelation will appear by Christmas. It's too early to tell just yet, but here's hoping!

Will the Dreamcast keyboard be compatible with anything else apart from e-mail and Internet?

Sega does seem very hard to pin down to



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newscast

DREAMCAST BREAKS RECORDS

The launch of Sega's dream console could not have gone better...



It's been over a month since the Dreamcast was unleashed on gamers all over Europe, and for Sega, sales of the console came as a record-breaking success.

On 14th October, the number of Dreamcasts sold across Europe totalled a massive 100,000. Many stores across loads of European cities, including London, Dublin, Edinburgh, Paris and Madrid, opened their doors at midnight

blockbuster film Armageddon, which in its first week sold 85,000 copies.

Just behind Sonic came Sega Rally 2, which has sold more than 74,000 copies across Europe. And as for peripherals, the Visual Memory Unit was the most sought-after add-on. More than 145,000 have been sold, as well as almost 90,000 additional controllers.

Jean-Francois Cecillon, Chief Executive of Sega Europe, said: "Sales



DREAMCASTS SOLD ACROSS EUROPE TOTALLED A MASSIVE 100,000

on the 13th. Thousands of eager customers had queued outside for hours, waiting for the clocks to strike 12.

Then the weekend came, and the pace didn't let up. Five days after the 14th, the total number sold reached over 185,000.

And that's just the hardware. In the UK, Sonic Adventure shot to Number One in the charts. According to Chart Track Weekly, seven Dreamcast software titles entered the Top 20 within two days of the console's launch.

If you compare sales of Sonic against the UK video market, the blue hedgehog beat the

have beaten all expectations, confirming the belief that the consumer and the games-developing community have in the Dreamcast. Dreamcast is an evolutionary console that adapts to the changing needs of the consumer. The public want to be part of that evolutionary process".

So there you have it; written proof that all the doubts cast and insults thrown at Sega are completely unfounded. The Dreamcast beat the PlayStation hands down where first weekly sales are concerned, and it's obvious that Sega aren't too worried about the release of the PlayStation 2 - and they shouldn't be. All they have to do now is keep the momentum going, and with 40 titles being released at Christmas, that shouldn't be too much of a problem, should it?



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BRINGING OUT THE BIG BOYS

Sony unveils its dream machine, but should Sega be worried?

The date: 13th of September, 1999. The place: the worldwide web. The reaction: well, a bit of a mixed one, to be truthful.

As you can see from these images, PlayStation 2's aesthetic design is unique to say the least. Our initial thoughts were that it looked uncannily like an 800-watt amplifier with all the trimmings. But look at what's inside the dark grey box and some somewhat superior technology lurks beneath.

The PlayStation 2 hits Japanese stores on the 4th March next year, with a UK release to follow in the Autumn. At the moment, its retail price is estimated at 39,800 Yen (in Japanese notes, that is). The price



over here hasn't been set yet, but the Japanese price is around £235 in UK notes. However, you have to remember that's without UK tax or Internet facilities, which are to be sold separately. So that's two downsides to the PS 2 already, seeing as the Dreamcast is Internet-ready at a bargain price of £199.99.

Okay, so PS 2 has more memory, a DVD drive, a 128-bit Emotion Engine which gives developers an almost-free reign with their games. It's backwards-compatible, and that may be one of

Sony's main selling points. It's a static box, though, where the Dreamcast has the potential to be opened up and upgraded to a higher spec at any point. It's not out of the question that the DC will have a DVD drive either - Sega would be barking mad not to have something spectacular up their suit sleeves.

However, one very important aspect Sony have slipped up with is on-line gaming, which won't be possible until early 2001. Unlike the Dreamcast, which, after a few technical hitches, will be ready for Internet gaming from its release - oh dear.

But perhaps most importantly, Sega's console will already have an established user-base. So Sega's not to be written off just yet, and their now-old bad reputation will almost certainly be forgotten.



DREAMCAST IN FOR A DUAL SHOCK

Dreamcast pads to resemble the PlayStation Dual Shock controller...



There's just one problem - how are they going to utilise Sega's VMU?

• One of the PSX's Dual Shock analogue controllers...

STILL CLASS

Taking a mega-byte EMS, based in China, has developed a new, high-capacity VMU for the Dreamcast. It stores 800 blocks of game saves, and also increases its storage capacity by letting you transfer files onto PC.

Pick up a Pen Pen

With Dreamcast hardware and software ads being shown on TV, Infogrames has also jumped on the bandwagon with their new Japanese game Pen Pen Triclon (reviewed Page 57). There are promotions on TV and radio, and a three-month print ad campaign in the lifestyle and children's press. You can even find it playable on pads in high-street stores.

Crazy Colours

Sega of Japan has officially announced plans to develop four new coloured controllers ready for sale later this year. Blue, purple, black and green pads will retail at around £25 over here.

Sonic Adventure 2?

Sega of America has confirmed that Sonic Team is working hard on a sequel to Sonic Adventure. And it's not going to be a half-hearted attempt like Sonic Adventure International. There's also been gossip about a spin-off game starring a yet-named star from Sonic Adventure. No dates have been mentioned as yet.

Code Veronica delayed

Bad news: Sega-developed Resident Evil: Code Veronica has been delayed. It won't be coming out in December as originally thought. In fact, it won't be hitting Japan until sometime next year.

STILL CLASS

prospects**Eternal Arcadia**

Created by the team who gave us Phantasy Star, Eternal Arcadia is an RPG that boasts lush scenery, an in-depth plot and interesting characters. Expect to see a revival of some of the magic we've seen in RPGs of old.

Cho-Hammar Golf

With no golf games ready for the DC launch, Sega plan to release one in the coming months. Hopefully they'll make the title that little extra special, considering it's for their next-gen console; we'll have to wait and see.

World's Scariest Police Chases

Based on an American television show, you're the driver of a police car, chasing bad guys over 75 missions. Developer Teeny Weeny games promise the largest city ever seen in a driving game. Turn to page 34 for more...

Super Runabout

It's been said that this Sega title takes the best from games such as Sega Rally 2, Tokyo Extreme Racer and Speed Devils and lumps it all into one massive bundle. It's mission-based, with huge areas to explore, mainly in San Francisco. We'll keep the details coming.

SEGA'S GONE SUPER-SONIC

Four Sonic Team games appear in the pipeline...

The Sonic Team have been reunited to bring us another four titles from Sega.

The first of the four is NiGHTS 2, the sequel to Sega's popular NiGHTS title.

Then comes Samba de Amigo, one of Sonic Team's new games, which uses the Naomi arcade hardware. The object of this game is to shake maracas in time with the character on screen. Once you've finished, you're rewarded with a rating. The game pits you against the CPU, or you can choose to play against a friend. It sounds a bit weak to us, and it's still not confirmed whether it will definitely be released on the Dreamcast.

Sonic Adventure International is an extension (of sorts) of Sega's



prized launch title. It's got brand-new Internet options to enable you to download more tracks for the Twinkle Circuit amongst other

things, but apparently there aren't many vast improvements or differences from the original.

Japanese stores will have it in stock from 14th October, so it will be a while before we have the pleasure.

Chu Chu Rocket is a four-player puzzle game that can be played on-line. The full details of the game have yet to be disclosed; all we know is it will have Battle Mode, Puzzle Mode and Normal Mode. It's being released in Japan on the 11th November.

Finally comes Phantasy Star On-line. This title isn't exactly a true sequel to the previous Phantasy Star games; more of a spin-off. The on-line adventure caters for up to four players, and although not a massive RPG, Sonic Team have instead concentrated on including a solid storyline.

global news

WHILE STOCKS LAST

America just can't get enough Dreamcasts

Dreamcast sales over in the USA still aren't letting up. According to Sega of America, their launch figures have already run rings around those of any other games console. Just over 500,000 units were sold during the DC's first two weeks on the shop shelves. And let it be noted that Sony and Nintendo took four months to shift that many. Demand is so high for Sega's dream machine that they've had to produce more in the fear that those shelves may empty if demand stays so high.

Peter Moore, Vice President of marketing for Sega Enterprises, said: "Sales show no sign of slacking after what we felt was a euphoric launch".

HAZARDOUS GOINGS-ON

Evil in residence once more...

Capcom has officially announced that there will be a Dreamcast version of Bio Hazard 2, known in the UK as Resident Evil 2. It will undergo a name change, though not a drastic one; in fact, they're just putting the word 'Plus' at the end.

It's scheduled for release in Japan on 23rd December in a three GD-ROM set with the second disc being the soundtrack of the game. The third disc will come as a nice surprise, as it's a playable demo of Bio Hazard: Code Veronica.

SUMPTUOUS SOUNDS

Would you believe it? In Japan, CD stores are stocking a rather special title called Shenmue: Orchestral Version. No doubt you're thinking it must be awful, but that's where you're wrong. SegaWeb's site has a full review of all the tracks, and they say it's got some of the most stunning music they've ever heard. The music's composed by Toshiyuki

Watanae, and was overseen by Yu Suzuki himself. It looks as though most of the tracks are remixed from the soundtrack in the game itself; sounds promising. If you want to hear a short piece from it, then go to SegaWeb's website at www.segaweb.com where you can find a .wav file to download. We've had a listen, and it's nothing short of brilliant.

Logic 3 introduces the ultimate sound system...

You know how it is. You've got your Dreamcast (at last), and you've plugged it into your ten-year-old portable television, but you're just not getting the kind of sound you would like to go with the amazing game you're playing.

Well, worry no longer, because Logic 3 has come to your rescue with the Screenbeat Sound Station.

It looks uncannily like an iMac, and funnily enough, you can use it with one as well. But most importantly, you can plug it in to your Dreamcast.

The Sound Station has a three-way sub-woofer speaker system, variable volume and bass control and an acoustically-engineered cabinet. But enough of the sales pitch; we got our hands on one, and it sounds amazing, especially with some of the game's soundtracks. It costs £49.99, but don't be too disturbed, as not only can you use it with your DC, but also with a Walkman, Discman, CD player or an MP3; look at it like that, and you've got yourselves a bargain!

DREAMCAST GETS BASS



COMPETITION WIN SONIC THE HEDGEHOG THE MOVIE

You've bought the game, now see the movie, as everyone's favourite blue spiky creature is strutting in his own cartoon. It's a little bit of everything; romcom, comedy and action! We've got ten of these little beauties to give away, and all you have to do is stand a chance of winning is answer this simple question:

How many Sonic games have there been (including the latest)?

Send your answers on a postcard by the 30th December to:

Super Sonic
Competition
Dreamcast Monthly
Magazine
22 Strand Street
Poole
Dorset
BH15 1SB



DREAMCAST SHAKE UP

As you may have noticed from the news, Taiwan has recently been rocked by an earthquake that reached 7.3 on the Richter Scale. What you may not know is that the Taiwan Manufacturing Company, which makes the NEC PowerV2 chip used to power the Dreamcast's 3D engine, took a bit of a battering.

Vice President of Marketing at Sega of America said that if the demand for consoles continues to

rise (which it will), production of the chips will certainly be challenged.

The Taiwan production facility was out of action for a few days. After the power was restored, production resumed at only a quarter of its normal rate.

Sega have subsequently stated that they do have a back-stock of the PowerV2 chips which should be sufficient to meet demand until the factory gets back up to speed.

prospects cont

Space Channel 5

The team who helped develop *Space Channel 5* have moved on, creating a Dreamcast rhythm-action game. The game's set in the 20th Century, and follows a reporter called Ulala whose mission is to dance and to get everyone else to boogie with her. Sounds cool...

Virtua Striker 2

This is a straight port of the Naomi version. There's glorious stadiums and more importantly realistic gameplay. Stiff competition for *UEFA Striker*? Maybe.

JAPANESE NOVEMBER RELEASES

3rd November

Space Griffon
Langrisser
Millennium

11th November

Chu Chu Rocket
Super Producers

18th November

Hiryu no Ken
Retsuden

25th November

Maken X
Grauen Brigade
Kapital 2
Death Crimson 2
Go Goll
Zombie Revenge

COMPETITION WINNERS

As promised, we can now tell you who the ten lucky people are who won a Dreamcast in Issue One's competition. The question we asked was how many megabytes of ram is there in a Dreamcast, and the answer's 26!

We had thousands of entries, and we managed to pull these ten names out of a rather large hat:

Anthony Turner from Tuxford, Notts
Justin Lott from North Luffenham, Leics
Edward Easton from Peterborough
Benjamin Wilkins from Chigwell in Essex
Andrew Ahrol from Blackpool
Anthony Scott from Aberdeen
in Scotland

Stuart Talbot from Coventry
Anthony Nixon from Greenleys in Milton Keynes
Kevin Le from Kings Avenue, South West London
James Pearce from Dover

Then there's the winner of the SEGA PARK compo - that person's Daniel Pitcher from London.

Congratulations!

SEGA GETS EXCITED

More handshakes in new Internet deals...



Excite has signed a pan-European agreement with Sega Europe to become its exclusive Internet search and navigation partner for the Dreamcast.

Dreamcast users can access Excite's localised search capabilities in the UK, Italy, Germany, Spain and France. The search engine is easy to use, and will help gamers navigate the huge amount of information available on the Internet.

Evan Rudowski, Director of European Operations of Sega Europe for Excite, said: "The European Internet access market is going to change significantly with the introduction of Sega's next-generation console. Sega has realised the importance of offering European gamers a compelling and localised Internet experience, and we are delighted to be Sega's exclusive Dreamcast Internet search and navigation partner across Europe".

... AND YOU THOUGHT IT WOULD NEVER HAPPEN

Lara Croft in discussions with Sega...

It's only a rumour, but it could soon become a reality - Core Design and Sega may release a Dreamcast Tomb Raider title for the Millennium.

It was rumoured that TR 4 would be released on the Dreamcast, but no such luck, as Core signed an exclusivity deal with Sony three years ago saying Lara would only be found on the PlayStation and PC.

But that contract's about to expire, and Sega and Core want to rekindle their old relationship. Believe it or not, the Derby-based publisher developed a few games for the Mega Drive, and even released the original Tomb Raider title on the Saturn. So with the end-of-deal date drawing ever closer, Lara's up for grabs, and what better platform to see her on next than the Dreamcast?

Unfortunately, there's no news on what the title will be like, but it looks as though it won't follow the series we've seen so far.

AISP LAUNCHES SEAL OF QUALITY

The introduction of quality control...

It would be difficult to count the times we've gone out and bought a game, only to find it's a load of old hogwash. But those days will soon be gone, as the Association of Independent Software Publishers (AISP) aim to make this a thing of the past with its Seal of Quality.

From December this year, games displaying the seal of quality have undergone vigorous quality control procedures to ensure they meet the highest standards of quality and excellence.

The AISP members didn't just wake up one morning with this inspirational idea. Apparently, they conducted some extensive market research and found almost 70 per cent of people polled said they had been disappointed with the quality of a game they'd bought in the last six months on at least one occasion.

They've already started working with many of the UK's leading developers and software publishers, monitoring their quality control procedures to make sure they meet the association's high standards.

Gaetano Alfano, managing Director and founder of the AISP, said: "Because of the high price of games, gamers need to know they're buying a quality product, and when they see our seal of quality it offers them peace of mind".

We're sure you'll all sleep easier tonight!



MIDWAY SCORE SHAQUILLE O'NEAL

LA Lakers superstar turns cover model...

Midway's signed a three-year deal with basketball superstar and part-time rap artist/actor Shaquille O'Neal to appear as the cover model for the upcoming NBA Showtime.

But that's not the his only involvement. The Lakers star will also act as spokesman for the game, and collaborate with Midway on future games and marketing activities.

Midway promises a vibrant, motion-captured, action-packed title, with crossover dribble moves, no-look passes, high-flying dunks, hidden characters and the look and feel of an NBC broadcast. The title

will feature all 29 NBA teams and over 120 of the most realistic NBA stars to ever lace 'em up on home console systems.

Apparently, Shaquille is an avid video gamer and was named one of the 50 greatest players in NBA history.

"Videogames have always been the next best thing to being there for me", said Shaquille. "NBA Showtime: NBA on NBC has the hottest graphics I've ever seen. Playing the game is like watching an NBA highlights film. NBA Showtime is everything I love about basketball, and I'm looking forward to putting my mark on future versions".



SHENMUE SLIPS

Sega of Japan announces *Shenmue* delay...

The planned Japanese release date of *Shenmue* Chapter 1: Yokosuka was the 28th October. However, Yu Suzuki's overworked development team have postponed it until Spring 2000.

It's understandable that Yu Suzuki wants time to perfect his eagerly-awaited title. To create another realistic world using CG, and to get the player fully immersed in the gameplay, has never been tried before. Usually, the program's only written for you to control a main character. In *Shenmue*, there's multiple processing going on to constantly change

the weather conditions and invent the individual lives of thousands of characters at the same time.

A spokesman for Sega of Japan said: "We're now working really hard to complete this big job, and to release it as soon as possible. We're sure you will enjoy the game, and be impressed with this new experience. Please be patient".



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feature

RenderWare for Games



RenderWare



Criterion Software has a lot of claims to fame. The first 3D library for the PC, first 3D game on the STB and 100 man YEARS' experience with 3D graphics. Derek dela Fuente went to Guildford to find out more...

Did you ever wonder about how games programmers do all those nifty special effects? You know the kind of thing: objects casting shadows, hair blowing in the wind, smoke, flames, all the kind of stuff that's making our games more realistic and fun to play nowadays. Don't get me wrong, although creative effects are just icing on the cake, to some extent without that icing half of today's titles would hardly merit a second glance. And that's your fault - yep, you sitting reading this. Because you, the consumer, have decided that each top title you buy has to be just that step further on than the last top title you played. So developers and publishers strive to bring you more,

bigger, better, faster, so you'll keep buying their games.

The trouble is for developers though, is that 'more' requires a lot of the time and expense that aren't available as readily as they used to be. Games nowadays need bigger development teams than ever before, and every day that they work on a title pushes up the overall cost to themselves, and eventually, to you. So how do you keep game costs down but still manage to pull enough new effects out of the hat to please jaded games players? Enter Criterion Studios and RenderWare.

RenderWare is one of the main games development software packages - a game 'engine' - around at the moment, and it's been up there with the best of them for about seven years now. So successful is the RenderWare package that over a thousand developers world wide use it for games creation on every major format you can think of: PC, Mac, Linux, and of course, the good old Dreamcast. Not only that, but they even have 20 engineers working on development kits/engines for computers and consoles that you won't even have heard of yet!

OBJECTS MADE UP OF HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF POLYGONS CAN BE PLACED INTO A WORLD AND MANIPULATED IN REAL TIME

RenderWare for Games



Refinement Surfaces



Geometric Textures



The Engine Room

A game engine is just what it sounds like, a package that developers can use to write games that, to some extent, has the hard work taken out of it. For programmers, for instance, routines to send an on-screen object from A to B can be programmed in with a few basic commands rather than the vast realms of code it used to take. Not too long ago, any game artist trying to drum up game levels would have to set up each test scene, every little change, and render it to see how it looked before finalising it for a game. This was obviously incredibly time-consuming.

RENDERWARE IS ABOUT EASE OF USE, MAKING LIFE SIMPLER FOR ALL INVOLVED

but now the RenderWare engine can give instant feedback when creating 3D worlds, and even big objects made up of hundreds of thousands of polygons can be placed into a world and manipulated (expanded, rotated, etc.) in real time. You want that tree over here? Bigger? More of them? Easy.

RenderWare is about ease of use, making life far more simple for all involved in the creation stage of a title so that there's more time left over to talk about getting originality, gameplay and new effects into our games. Every time-consuming task is reduced to its lowest possible action. As the RenderWare team puts it, "Performances need to be leading edge; the architecture must be open, scalable and resource-efficient." There's simply no room for unnecessary components - software has to sustain 'mass market' quality and supporting a game studio becomes more price-sensitive; put simply, time is money.

Nitty Gritty

But RenderWare doesn't just stop there, ohhhh no - too easy. The package takes the hard work out of everything, animation, game physics, and there's even an Artificial Intelligence plug-in under development right now that'll make game characters act more like real people than ever before. There are plug-ins and core utilities for creating lens flares (last year's flavour of the month), coronas, dynamic soft shadows and unlimited light sources. You can give a game masses of detailed textures that at one time would have taken an age to be 'decompressed' or

packed-down format in your console's memory), and also give those textures super-realistic bumps and grooves quickly and easily.

If you've written a game in one format and want to transfer it to another computer platform, RenderWare will cut down the length of time it takes to transfer the code from months to weeks. In theory, you could develop games for any type of computer the RenderWare engine has an output for just using a PC. Not bad at all for a program whose core code is only 100K!

But apart from making life easier for developers, RenderWare is also instrumental in getting those

lovely SFX and graphics down onto your Dreamcast - and without it and packages like it, the games of today would look far more basic than they do now. The problem lies with the way most machines put polygons - the basic building blocks of modern games - on screen. You see bigger and more realistic graphics need to be made from even more polygons, and, of course, sooner or later you'll get to a point where any computer platform's processor (the CPU to you mate) can't keep up with the amount of polygons it needs to display to run a game properly. Too many on-screen characters or highly complex backgrounds and it's game over.

But RenderWare scores here yet again with a neat package that takes the amount of visible polygons in a 3D model and decides which will be visible to the viewer; only choosing to display those that the player can see at any one time. One of the Criterion team's favourite demonstrations of this is to show how a polygon-based model of the Lyon Town Hall would normally be built from over 500,000 polygons. Once passed through the RenderWare kit, however, this is reduced to just 12,000 polygons with no loss of detail!

Secondly, the RenderWare engine doesn't hold the full 3D model in its memory ready for putting on-screen - an alternative representation of the model is used which takes much less



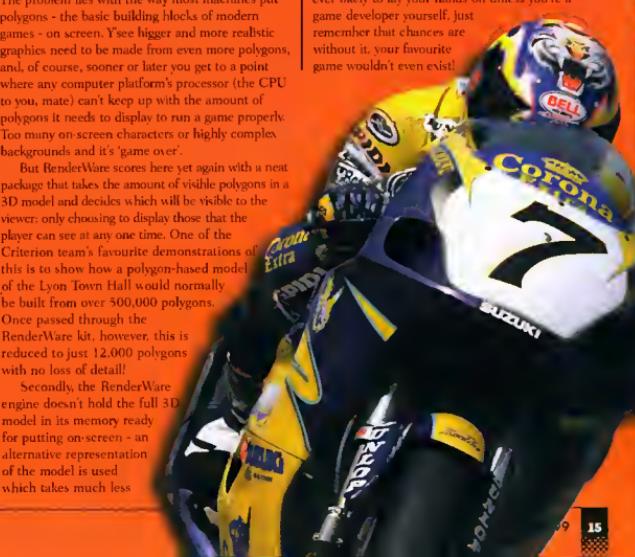
<http://www.renderware.com>



memory and allows the model to be generated on-the-fly as required. Sounds very easy, but the technology behind all of this has only been available for the last two or three years, and the basic principles are being constantly researched and improved upon by the Criterion team.

To see what RenderWare can really do you need to look no further forward than its own three titles currently in development: Deep Fighter, due next year, Trick Style, and Suzuki Alstare Extreme Racing - pictures of which are dotted about these pages. Alternatively, if you'd like your socks really knocked off then just visit the RenderWare website at <http://www.renderware.com>.

Although RenderWare isn't something you're ever likely to lay your hands on unless you're a game developer yourself, just remember that chances are without it, your favourite game wouldn't even exist!



showcase

SOUTH PARK



'Headin' down to South Park,
gonna' have myself a time.
Friendly faces everywhere,
humble folks without
temptation. Going down to
South Park gonna' leave my
woes behind. Ample parking
day or night, people shouting,
"howdy neighbour" ...
There's nothing funnier than a
country taking the mick out of
itself. And perhaps it's not
surprising that the Americans
do it best...



It all started when a Fox executive asked film-makers Trey Parker and Matt Stone to develop a video to send as a Christmas card. They only used \$750 of their \$2000 budget, and it was sent to 80 people, who all raved about it. This five-minute video prompted Comedy Central to offer them a weekly series, and the result, South Park, is now the highest-rated show in Comedy Central history.

With such a huge gamesplaying audience, it came as no surprise when the first South Park game was released earlier this year on the N64, PC and PSX. The N64 and PC versions went down very well, but the PSX version lagged due to its inferior game engine.

After such a great debut success, Acclaim are preparing to launch two further South Park titles: Chef's Luv Shack and South Park Rally. The latter has been taken on by Tantalus Interactive of Australia: quite an unknown quantity to anyone outside the industry. Luv Shack, like the original game, has been developed in-house at Acclaim over in Texas. So can they repeat their success?

Chef's Luv Shack



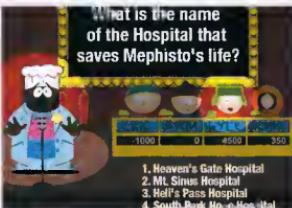
INITIALLY...

CHEF BURSTS ON STAGE WITH SOME SKIMPILY-DRESSED QUIZ SHOW HOSTS, AND THE COMEDY BEGINS. GRAPHICALLY IT'S NOTHING SPECIAL, BUT THE HUMOUR AND ATMOSPHERE IS STRAIGHT OUT OF COMEDY CENTRAL.

Luv Shack, that's where it's at... or is it? The problem is that when people get hold of a big licence like South Park, they tend to go a bit funny in the head. Why should they bother to make a decent game when they know it'll sell regardless? For this reason, my expectations for Luv Shack were not very high, and they sank

further when I heard it was a quiz. But then maybe that's just me: my pint's always been half empty...

Watching the intro performance, my fears were doused. Chef's voice is that of Isaac Hayes, who also does the TV show, and from the start, you know this is authentic South Park. The characters are, of course, carbon



Publisher
Acclaim
26th Nov '99

Developer
Acclaim

Platform
PSX

Rating
14

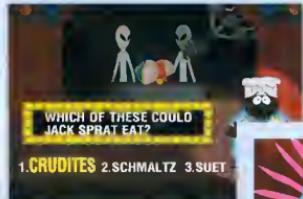
Price
£29.99

Genre
Party

Console
PSX

Contact
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showcase



EACH CHARACTER IS UTTERLY PATHETIC AND SIMPLISTIC, AND YET SOMEHOW BELIEVABLE

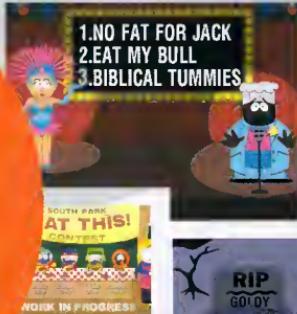
copies. With such a basic animation style, anything less just wouldn't do. But more importantly, the distinctive crude and surreal humour that defines the TV show has also been recreated. Each character is utterly pathetic and simplistic, and yet somehow believable. It's in the expression, the voices and the timing, and it's been ported directly from your television.

Unfortunately, you soon realise that, funny as it is, it's just a quiz, and as such, very limited in its playability. And the excessive difficulty of the questions only serves to compound the problem. Only true

South Park fans stand a chance of a decent score, and as it's multiple choice, it soon becomes a comical case of deciding which sounds the most, yes, most, ridiculous. A fair number of questions are just general knowledge, and not linked to South Park. But many are based around America, and what may be general knowledge for Americans is often alien to us islanders. For example: 'I'm on the Hershaw Highway; what state am I in?' Or, 'Which is the largest cafeteria chain in America?'

Sub-Standard?

Thankfully, the quiz is frequently interrupted and largely rescued by an impressive array of sub-games. Impressive, however, only in their number. For the most part, quantity seems to have stamped all over quality. The graphics are laughable, in both respects, and the controls uninviting. There's also the problem that before you can get to grips with a sub-game, it's over, and you won't see it again until the next time it's randomly selected. But having said that, with four players, the element of competition combined with the huge



Interview

Park Life

There's a seemingly endless number of sub-games, which is a good thing, because you won't be desperate to play many of them twice. Here are three of the better examples:

Beefcake

Move your 'fat ass' to catch the cans, bouncing them off your bladder for bonus points. Avoid red cans.

Bees at the Picnic

Eliminate the 'pesky bastards' with your killer sproy and avoid the deadly stingers.

Asses in Space

Shoot all the asteroid-like asses. Use your 'gas' to cruise around, and stay away from the aliens. 'May the fart be with you'.



comedy value somehow makes each game greater than the sum of its parts.

It's this comedy value that really defines the game, and it's clear that Comedy Central have played a large part in its development. Playing on your own is a non-starter, but with a few mates, it can be a good laugh. Unfortunately, comedy on its own doesn't make a decent game, and there's a distinct lack of real depth. Besides, what would you rather do? Have a South Park pie-eating competition, or beat your mates to a pulp on Soul Calibur?

If you would choose the former, you're

IT'S THE COMEDY VALUE THAT REALLY DEFINES THE GAME

obviously a South Park veteran, and this game has plenty to offer. Otherwise, just stick with the programme. It may only be a £30 game, but if you wanted mediocre, low-cost titles, you wouldn't be reading this mag.

But don't feel disappointed, because there's another option. Of the two South Park games, Bally has enjoyed the largest development team, and it looks set to provide the depth and playability that Luv Shack sadly lacks.

So now to Acclaim's second venture, South Park Rally. This game isn't being developed in-house, but by Tantalus Interactive, a relatively new force in the Dreamcast's world. In fact, only in 1998 did Tantalus move from converting other peoples' games to building their own. South Park Rally is their main project at the moment, and they're very aware of the great anticipation surrounding it. The game is being developed across DC, PC, PSX and N64, making this the largest project ever undertaken by an independent Australian developer.

The team is also suitably large, including three directors, one producer, nine artists, eight coders and one game designer. They reside in a top-story development studio and have access to a penthouse retreat for those special or stressful events. Sounds a bit lavish, but by the looks of things, they must work as hard as they play.

Yellin' about South Park.

I flew out to Melbourne, to ask SPR's producer, Doug Yellin, a few questions... on my trusty flying pig: damn telephones!

DCM What makes South Park a good licence for a game?

DY Well, we've certainly enjoyed working with the licence. The team are great fans of the show, which has made it very easy to come up with ideas for the game.

DCM How did you research the programme?

DY We had considerable feedback from the creators, but the main inspiration came from the show itself.

DCM Where do you expect the game to do best - in America or the UK and Europe?

DY The game will obviously do well in the US and UK, where South Park remains the phenomenal success it has been since it began. Some European countries have only just started broadcasting South Park. If the series repeats its English-speaking success abroad, the game should do very well.

DCM Which aspect of the game are you most proud of, and what's its main strength?

DY Producing a title that does something new with the genre has been the most taxing part of the development process. Rather than simply reproducing Mario Kart in a South Park environment, we've tried to make the humour integral to the game's design, so you find yourself completing tasks as a part of the race rather than simply racing round the same tracks again and again.

DCM How far do you think the DC has been pushed up to now?

DY The Dreamcast has a long way to go before it realises its full potential. Graphically, Sonic Adventure and Soul Calibur stand out, but Criterion's Trick Style also looks fantastic.

Cheers Doug. It's always nice to see people innovating, particularly when there's a licence involved. Rarely do games like these live up to their hype, but SPR is right on course.

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VERDICT

Authentic South Park characters and humour.
Satisfying in depth and long-term appeal

6

showcase



South Park Rally



Developer: Tantalus Interactive
Publisher: Acclaim

Racing

Genre: Racing

Rating: 16th December 99

Released: 16th December 99

From the minute you switch on, you know what kind of game you're playing. Most intros these days are straight-laced showcases - a chance for the developers to show their mastery of your machine. South Park's intro has all the aesthetic finesse of, well, South Park, but more importantly, it has all the comedy as well. Kenny and four cows are gratuitously dismembered for your unique viewing pleasure. Splendid.

Of course, comedy is a fine and rare commodity in games, but we all like a bit of gloss, and unfortunately, as a direct PC conversion, this is no graphical spectacle. The elite texturing and lighting strengths of the Dreamcast have not been fully exploited. That said, if you own a PC, you know games tend to be developed for up-and-coming technology rather than the outdated piece



SOUTH PARK

who are comedy central?

Comedy Central is America's only all-comedy network, and is currently available in over 58 million US homes. It's a trademark of Comedy Partners, which is a 50-50 joint venture between Time Warner Entertainment and Viacom. In other words, it's rather large and filthy-rich.

NO GAME BOASTS A MORE SURREAL ARSENAL

of junk you bought last week. Annoying for PC gamers, but useful for Dreamcast conversions. While your mates' PCs may struggle, you can slam in the CD and race smoothly in the highest resolution with no messing about.

The first thing you think when you play the game, (aside from 'kick ass!'), is it's Mario Kart gone to South Park. And you won't be far wrong, but SPR's producer, Doug Yellin, was keen to build in some original concepts of his own, and he has succeeded. For instance, as in Mario Kart, there are shortcuts, but not just one or two. There's no set route to follow, and the only demand is that you complete your mission, which usually consists of passing checkpoints or collecting items from around the course. With fairly complex courses, even the AI characters sometimes choose different routes.

The first cup holds seven tracks, split into



three graphical themes. The first section is themed around Mr Garrison, starting with a tricycle race on the running track and finishing inside South Park Elementary School. Corridors and rooms are ripe for ripping up, including Mr Garrison's classroom and the school canteen.

School's Out...

The second theme belongs to Mr Mackie and involves racing the streets surrounding the

South Park goes Psychedelic

The four cups include Chef's Cup, Uncle Jimbo and Red's Racing Trophy, Big Gay Al's Big Gay Cup and The Visitors' Cup. Each is split into three themes. Chef's cup starts with Mr Garrison's tricycle race around the school running track. Features include:

The School Bus - The school bus is driven around the running track and playing fields, with Mr Crabbie shooting obstacles and generally obstructing the competitors.

Mr Hat and Mr Twig - These characters appear randomly throughout the race, barking obstacles and insults at the players.

Hurdles - These obstacles are placed strategically around the course, and if hit, they slow you down.

Springboards - Springboards allow you to jump the racing at specified points and access shortcuts.

The second theme, Mr Mackie's, takes you through a maze of streets and alleyways, before finishing back inside the school... kind of. Features include:

India Warp - Race very which transports the characters to a psychedelic India environment, transforming their buggy into an Indian ewe.

Mackie Balloon - Mr Mackie's inflated head is floating around (as in the South Park Series Two episode, 'Buu Wee Waa').

Chucky Monkeys - Monkeys hide in the tops of palm trees edging the track. They hurl coconuts at you, causing you to spin out and crash.

The final section belongs to Chef. Beginning on the beach, you soon move off-shore for one of the most original concepts in the game: the Water Tubbie Event. Players are pulled around in tyre inner tubes by hooks travelling set paths. The optimum racing curve generates the maximum amount of speed. Features include:

Ramps - Using ramps actually increases your speed as well as enabling access to extra pick-ups.

Rock - Don't hit them.



showcase



THE TWO GAMES HAVE DONE A GREAT JOB OF CAPTURING THE SOUTH PARK VIBE

school. Side streets and alleyways allow for multiple shortcuts. Anti-drug and alcohol posters litter the streets, but the game is far from sober. Upon crashing through the school doors, you're transported to a psychedelic Indian landscape, with Mr Mackie's head floating above the track.

Laying claim to the final and largest graphical theme is, of course, Chef. All his tracks are based around Holiday Island. The first is raced on the beaches, the second in inner-tubes across the surface of the water! The grand finale involves racing Holiday Island in reverse against Chef himself.

And then there are the weapons. Surely no game boasts a more surreal arsenal. Invincibility is indicated by Mr Hankey the Christmas Poo flying around your car. You can also drop rats that act as oil slicks, caking your opponents' wheels in blood. If you're unlucky, you pick up a Saddam Hussain, which flashes his face across the screen, obstructing your view. Every weapon is superbly designed and highly amusing to use.

Okay, so the graphics aren't revolutionary, but

they're not dull either. And when Mario Kart came out on the N64, it was little better than the original SNES title, proving that it's not the graphics that make the game - it's the gameplay. By innovating in that crucial area, Tantalus have taken a brave but intelligent gamble, and it truly seems to have paid off. The Dreamcast already boasts some of the fastest, smoothest and most realistic racing games on the planet, and South Park Rally seems the perfect fun-for-all addition.

Generally the two games have done a great job of capturing the South Park vibe. They have also created some fresh gaming concepts. It's a shame Luv Shack's ideas didn't quite come together, but it's authentic enough to please hardcore fans of the programme. As a gamer and a South Park fan, I can tell you South Park Rally will be massive. It's only a shame that the game couldn't have drawn more on the Dreamcast's strengths. There are still a few technical niggles, but once they're ironed out, the stage will be set for the launch of a Mario Kart-beater that no one will want to be without.

SOUTH PARK RALLY

super cars for superstars...



Stan - Red Lamborghini



Cartman - Army Jeep



Kyle - Red Porsche



Kenny - Go-Kart



Wendy - Pink Mercedes



Brady - Police car



Chef - Station Wagon



Ned - Jeep



Scuzzibucket - Weeved basket



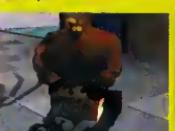
Big Gay Al - The Big Gay Love Bus



Butters - Karts



Mr. Garrison - Volkswagen Beetle



Zion - Flame-painted hot red

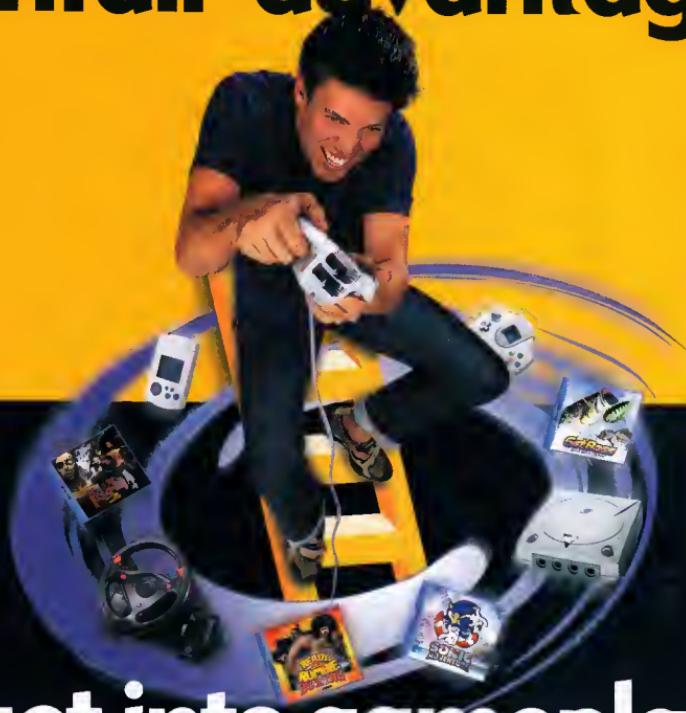


Jesus - A puffy little cloud



Starvo Marvin - A wagon carrying wheat

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interview

AN EVENING WITH JIMMY WHITE

Britain's favourite snooker player, Jimmy White, is racking up the balls on Dreamcast as he lends his name to Virgin's snooker sim, Jimmy White 2: Cueball. Dave Gibbon met up with the whirlwind himself to chat about life and the game itself...

JIMMY'S BIOGRAPHY

Name: James Warren White

Date of Birth: 2nd May 1962

Married: Maureen - they met in a fish and chip shop in Testling, London

Kids: Jimmy has four daughters and one son

Home: Oxshott, Surrey

Being the most powerful games machine on the planet, you'd expect the Dreamcast to have some impressive sports games on the horizon. But while there's heaps in the way of football and snowboarding, there's only one snooker game due for launch: Jimmy White's 2: Cueball.

Luckily for you lot, however, the game has proven itself to be of fine quality following marked success on the PC, and the Dreamcast version is just as good, if not better. Snooker god Jimmy White, hailed as one of Britain's national treasures, has added his name to developer Archer Maclean's latest baby.

The downtrodden people's champion comes with natural flair and a loveable rogue image, thanks

mainly to his marathon gambling sprees and drinking sessions - not that we approve of this kind of behaviour, you understand.

We sent Dave Gibbon, all-round sports fanatic and snooker fan, down to London's Capital Radio to interview Jimmy while he was playing a charity match. Lo and behold, he returned with a crate of beer in his hands - now there's a surprise!

Jimmy's biggest worry?

DCM Right Jimmy, what were your ambitions while at school?

JW Getting out of there! When I went to school, there was about 55 in a class. You'd do half an hour lessons and by the time they'd done the register it was f*****g all over. I had a headmaster called Arthur

Beatty who was really good to me. He knew I was good at snooker and put his job on the line actually. He used to let me go in on the mornings and have the afternoons off to practice, otherwise I just wouldn't go in. My dream at school was to get out of there; I was a little b*****d.

DCM Do you find you can read and write okay now?

JW In my last year at school, I learned mostly to read and then I taught myself on trains and all that. But I'm not a brilliant reader or writer. You know, if I wrote a letter I'd make so many mistakes. I can read a book, but I'd get a couple of words wrong so I'd get the whole story of the book wrong. If you're going to play any sport you need to go to school and get educated as well,



There's plenty of time to practice - you can have nights and weekends.

The new TV star

DCM What kind of breaks were you achieving after a year?

JW After a year, I was getting 30 breaks, which was brilliant for me. I made a century break when I was 13 and it was in all the national newspapers. They make 147s now at 13, which just shows how the game's improved.

DCM Did you get to appear on TV in your early days?

JW Yeah, I was on Blue Peter when Valerie Singleton was a presenter. I was only 13 and I was amazed at people's interest.

My first real success

DCM What was your first major win?

JW My first big tournament - I won the English Amateurs at 16. I was the youngest player ever to do that. But since then, my little mate David Gray has just beaten my record. He's just done that now; he beat me by a few weeks. But I held that record for 20 years.

DCM When you beat Alex Higgins for the first time, how did that feel?

JW It was a big match for me because Higgins is my idol. You know, even now I think he's the best snooker player I've ever seen. For me to beaten him under so much pressure was brilliant. It was a fantastic atmosphere, people were falling off the ceiling.

Gambling crazy

DCM When you reportedly won £114,000 for a 147 break, did it take long to spend?

JW I was gambling big time then. I was spending it on horse racing, dice, cards and dogs so I soon set fire to it. And I was drinking heavily all the way through it, so it didn't take long. When you win that much money for one frame of snooker it goes straight to your head.

DCM What's the largest bet you've had on the horses in one day?

JW I won £20,000 in one afternoon on the horses and lost it the next day. A small high!

DCM Did all that gambling and drinking teach you anything valuable?

JW You'll find that with all gamblers, they don't do it for the money - they do it for the buzz. If you go into a betting shop and watch someone having a bet, if they lose they have a bit of a moan, but

JW Yeah, Archer's great. He's a bit eccentric, but then most geniuses are. I went round his house once, and he had a Ferrari, a Porsche and some other car and then he had this Renault there. I asked what it was doing there? And he said it was faster than the others cars. He had it specially made so when he's at the

A FABULOUS EXAMPLE OF HOW REALISM AND FANTASY COMPLIMENT EACH OTHER WELL

if they win they get a little excited. But it's that two minutes of the horse running that's the buzz. That's the whole buzz, nothing else. But that's all behind me now. I now look to the future.

The Peoples' Champion

DCM How much fan mail do you now receive each week?

JW Yeah, I get quite a bit. I get around 100 letters a week. I also have a fan club on the Internet.

DCM With so much money resting on each shot, can you see players taking risky shots while on the table?

JW Ronnie O'Sullivan does. He goes for all his shots and if he's on top form, no-one can beat him. I had that and so did Higgins. He won't win as many games as Stephen Hendry, but when you do win it just looks great and the crowd love it.

DCM Who is your favourite snooker player drinking partner?

JW It's the one and only O'Sullivan.

DCM What did you think when you first saw Cuchall on Dreamcast?

JW It's a different class. I'm not being biased, but I've done the first one with Archer (Maclean - the game's developer) and this one's got so many things. And this glove thing, where the gloves go round with the cue is the best thing ever. I know the game will just do brilliantly.

DCM Do you own any consoles?

JW Yeah, we've got the lot!

DCM Did you deal much with Cuchall's developer, Archer Maclean?

Ten interesting facts about Jimmy White

1 He once made a century in two and a half minutes.

2 He's had over 150 147 breaks in his career, two of them televised.

3 In 1994, he paid a ransom for the return of his Staffordshire Bull Terrier, Splinter, who was kidnapped from his home in Oxshott, Surrey.

4 Tim, Jimmy's dad, introduced him to snooker at the age of 11.

5 In his early days, he and best friend Tony New were managed by a rogue character known as Dodgy Bob.

6 He reached his first-ever World Championship final in 1984, but was beaten by Steve Davis 18-16. But at one point, Jimmy was trailing 12-4 and made a stunning comeback.

7 His best season ever was in 1992. He won five major titles, three of them in the space of 50 days earning him £334,000.

8 He once escaped jail after being caught by police four times over the limit. He served 120 hours community service.

9 His favourite football team is Chelsea FC.

10 He lists his best friends as his dad, Eric Clapton, Prince Charles and Rolling Stones rocker, Ronnie Wood.



loadina



MDK 2

MDK2 - fun, thrills and frolics

Publisher Interplay
Released December 1999

Developer Bioware
Genre Action/Adventure



Many readers might not have heard of the original MDK, released on the PC and PlayStation nearly two years ago. Outrageously entertaining, you assumed the role of an unlikely hero called K (Kurt Hectic) in a colourful and surreal game based on first-person action laced with puzzles. Written by Shiny Entertainment, the game was truly original in many respects.

MDK2: The Setting, the Game

MDK2 is a third-person perspective game where the player takes the role of either Kurt, Max or Dr Fluke Hawkins. In the original MDK, Kurt was the only player and was noteworthy for his unique profile as well as his ribbon chute, sniper scope and chain gun. The player's goal was to defend the Earth from an evil invading alien empire, and the plot of the new title continues where the original left off.

After the end of the first MDK, Kurt, Max and the Doctor retire to the

seclusion of the Doctor's space monstrosity, the Jim Dandy. Shortly after all the victory parties are finished a second wave of evil Streamriding Aliens returns to destroy the earth. This time, however, the imperial emperor, Izzy Balooah, and his right-hand man, Schwang Schwang, are personally leading the attack. After having trouble with what initially appears to be a routine mission, Kurt requires the personal assistance of both Max and Doctor Hawkins to defeat the aliens.

Those unfamiliar with the first game would be unaware that it had a great practice mode to get you into the swing of things. It appears that this time around, the team are still grappling with how they are going to insert the practice mode, as Greg divulged: "Initially we were going to fully integrate it into the game for all three characters, but we've recently come to the opinion that it will probably work best if we have a 'practice room' aboard the Jim Dandy



■ Kurt comes face-to-face with one of the 20 new enemies in the game...

MDK 2

summary

MDK 2 is the ultimate blend of action and puzzles where you wander around vast locations and face the strangest and most captivating enemies you can imagine. It's a game of skill and precise reactions. However, this is no simple 'button-pushing' game, but a well-crafted world that always makes you want to play a bit longer than you originally planned.

Though the original MDK never got the acclaim it richly deserved, MDK2 will surely reach the heights this time around!



THE ETHOS OF MDK IS ARCADE ACTION FUN, WITH PLENTY OF BLASTING AND LOTS OF PUZZLES TO SOLVE

loading



THOUGH THE ORIGINAL MDK NEVER GOT THE ACCLAIM IT RICHLY DESERVED, MDK2 WILL SURELY REACH THE HEIGHTS THIS TIME AROUND!

MDK 2

heroes armed to thrill

All three characters have their own attributes. They each have a different health rating, a different speed in the environment, a different jump height, and most importantly, a completely different set of items and powers.

Kurt Hectic

Kurt is, of course, the hero of the original MDK. Kurt just happened to be aboard Dr Hawkins' ship, the Jia Bondy, when the nasty Streamriding Aliens decided to invade Earth, so he ended up wearing the famous Coll Suit and battling Earth's enemies in the first game. (In reality, there was really no other choice since Max has six legs.) Kurt's powers include a dual-purpose chain gun, sniper rifle and the famous Ribbon Chuto.

Max

Max, a six-legged dog with an attitude, is one of Dr Hawkins' unusual creations. While pining for some type of companionship, Dr Hawkins came up with the idea to build a robotic, six-legged dog. Originally, Max was something of a shy and demure fellow, but when he saw the threat that the Streamriding Aliens represented he took it upon himself to download a new

action hero personality. Max's powers include the ability to simultaneously hold up to four weapons (even really big weapons) and smoke a cigar (Cuban, of course). Max can holster his weapons so that he can get maximum mobility from two of his arms while still carrying weapons with his other two arms. This will allow him to crawl and lire at the same time.

Dr Fluke Hawkins

Dr Fluke Hawkins was quite a famous scientist and inventor back in the atomic age of Earth, but his usefulness seemed to fade as atomic energy lost much of its lustre. He retreated to the solitary existence of space and vowed not to return until he came up with "something really big." He discovered energy streams criss-crossing through space that would allow for high-speed space travel and matter transference. Of course, there was the problem of an alien race using the streams to invade Earth that seemed to suck some of the excitement out of Dr Hawkins' discovery. Dr Hawkins has the ability to combine objects into unique items and effects. He's not an action hero, nor is he a master of stealth, but he knows how to cause a lot of havoc (ripe with explosions).

The Enemy

Although we'll see a couple of the old favourites back in MDK2, there are about 20 different new enemies with a variety of different behaviours and attacks. These have location damage as in the first MDK (ie. shot a gun at a monster and it will drag it after himself when he walks). One to watch out for is the Streamriding Aliens, who are characterised by unusual shapes, strange behaviour and general aggression toward anything that moves. The top dog in the enemy camp is Zizzy Balooba, with the second largest called Schwang Schwing.

Play the Game

The ethos of MDK is arcade action fun with plenty of blasting and lots of puzzles to solve. The first game had six levels, but now you have nine, plus a special level at the end for a total of ten levels. As far as actual rooms and locations, they should have at least 50 per cent more than the original game, which makes this game truly MASSIVE! One level is about two kilometres long and wide!

Each of the levels has an end level boss, leading up to the final showdown with Sir Evilness himself, Zizzy Balooba. The level settings start on earth, then move to a variety of spacecraft orbiting the planet, and then to some otherworldly levels in a parallel dimension. The game has four distinct locations, three levels, and each character has three levels to complete. Greg expands on this point: "The structure of the game is level-based and driven by the story behind



YOU'LL SEE A
TALKING FISH
AND A MUTATED
CARROT, PLUS A
LOT MORE
WEIRD AND
WACKY FOLK



the game. Each level starts with an in-game cut-scene that details the purpose of the upcoming level and sets the tone for the gameplay".

Surprisingly, MDK2 is a single-player game only, with no multiplayer option planned or even in consideration. Each of the characters has different objectives and different gameplay focuses. Kurt is all about stealth and sniping; the Doctor has a few direct attacks, but has the ability to create items and effects out of simple household objects; while Max is a cigar-smoking, quad-gun-toting demolition squad of a dog. The gameplay decides which of the three heroes you play for a particular level. That is, you won't be able to choose which of the characters you want to play.

There will also be non-player characters in the game that you can talk to, but as usual in the world of MDK, they're not ordinary people! You'll see a talking fish and a mutated carrot, plus a lot more weird and wacky folk.

Shiny Happy People

Finally, as this was originally a Shiny game, what was the company's input, I asked? Did they help or supply you

with material?

"No," said Greg. "We're doing the title completely within BioWare. While we do enjoy and value the input of Shiny, we have the freedom to create our heart's desire. It's a nice place to be from a creative perspective. Shiny did give us quite a good wad of stuff. As I mentioned earlier, there's an excellent backstory to the MDK world. We had a screenplay based on MDK provided by Shiny, as well as a huge amount of art, sounds and concepts. It was quite a good bunch of material to use as a starting point for our work.



previews

Publisher *Activision*
Released Early '99

Developer *Pyramid*
Genre *Shooter*

Slave Zero

You're a mechanical monster and you blow things up...



It's going to be cool to play a hero capable of destroying entire worlds and massive buildings. Slave Zero is a huge 60-foot biomechanical war machine with only one objective; to destroy rival forces throughout the vast metropolis known as S1-9. The city is ruled by the evil SovKahn, who possesses a mysterious energy

force called Dark Matter.

Slave Zero is part of a secret rebellion force that steals SovKahn's technology. So that's the background; sounds uncomplicated enough, doesn't it?

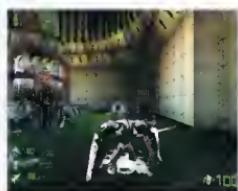
The aim of the game is to put an end to SovKahn's evil-doings and restore peace and tranquillity

to S1-9. Of course, the only way to do this is by wreaking as much havoc as possible, fighting against enemy Sentinels. These enemies range from human-sized troops and tanks to 100-foot-tall Titans, with some hardcore weaponry at their disposal - Hellspike Plasma Rail Cannons, for instance (say what?).

Scrap Metal...

There's a grand total of 15 different kinds of enemy, plus five bosses, seven mini-bosses and 13 missions to conquer. One of the coolest features you notice is the environments in which the game's set. If you can imagine the city in The Fifth Element, you get the picture. At the start of the game, you're at ground level; it's quite dark because you're in the shadows of some very tall buildings, and as you progress through the missions, you

THE GRAPHICS REALLY ARE SUPERB IN THIS GAME



Slave Zero meets an enemy boss in the form of a robotic spider...



get higher up and the skyline becomes gradually lighter.

The graphics really are superb in this game, especially the explosions. You would think that controlling a 60-foot robot would be quite stunted, but the big man is pretty light on his feet and Infogrames have clearly gone to some effort with his controls.

Lots of killing, running around and explosions; the perfect recipe for a good session with your Dreamcast. It's just a shame we have to wait until next year...

|| THERE'S LOTS OF KILLING, RUNNING AROUND AND EXPLOSIONS



Publisher Rage
Released 02 2000

Developer Rage
Genre Driving

Midnight GT

Move over Metropolis, Midnight GT's just round the corner!

Midnight GT takes the form of an official street rally racing league, where you race to become number one in the prestigious Midnight League. Standard legal road cars are all boy racerified with full body kits, mad paint jobs, and are turbo-charged and tuned to perfection. Races take place in two distinctly contrasted road types: open country roads and tight, winding street courses based on real locations. There are a total of 12 different locations in all covering a combination of 'point-to-point' rallying and circuit racing. There are six

game modes at present covering leagues, arcade modes and multiplayer games to keep even the fussiest gamesplayer occupied. League modes will include full damage on the performance and appearance of your cars, whereas playing in the Arcade modes doesn't. With eight gob-smacking cars to play with, followed by a further 10 cars unlockable as you progress Midnight GT seems to be shaping up to be a real genre leader. Watch out for more in coming issues...



Publisher Sega
Released Fourth Quarter 1999

Developer Red Lemon
Genre Shoot-'em-up

Take the Bullet

Play it for your own protection...



Red Lemon's *Take the Bullet* is a Quake-style shoot-'em-up set in America during the late Sixties. You take the role of Jack Travis, who's been landed with the job of protecting a

enemies are the Children of Gabrielle, a gang intent on killing Kincaide, the candidate.

With the option of using either a first- or third-person perspective, you set off exploring the game's 12 massive levels and along the way you can discover up to 18 different weapons. TTB can be played with up to four players at home, but more importantly, will be playable online with up to 16 players from all over the country. It's just a shame we



keyboard does what. But rest assured, shooting's been made easy in *Take the Bullet* as long as you've bought yourself a light gun.

Sega and Red Lemon are being overly secretive about this game - this may be because it's so good that they're planning to shock us punters, or it may be that it's run into some technical problems. The minute we find out anything new, you'll be the first to know.

TTB CAN BE PLAYED WITH FOUR PLAYERS AT HOME, BUT WILL BE PLAYABLE ONLINE WITH UP TO 16 PLAYERS



presidential candidate during the course of an election campaign.

TTB also comes with strategic elements in that you have to organise your fellow bodyguards to maximise the protection of the candidate. Your

have to wait until next April before we have the opportunity.

Most of you will probably be having flashbacks of playing that old classic *Doom* on your PC, fiddling around trying to figure out which key on your

Publisher Infogrames
Released TBA

Developer DarkWorks
Genre Action/Adventure

Alone in the Dark 4



The grandfather of the genre returns!

When *Alone in the Dark* first hit the PC market many years ago it opened a whole new can of game-playing worms for players to feast on. It was the first in what is now a long line of action/adventure games culminating recently in *Resident Evil* 1, 2, 3 and *Code Veronica*. What's surprising about the development of the genre over the years is that the gameplay has remained pretty much faithful to *Alone in the Dark's* winning formula. The graphics have come on a long way from the handful of polygons that first made up Edward Carnby - as, of course, have the gore and violence.

Alone in the Dark 4 promises more atmosphere, eerier camera angles, more macabre story lines and all the classic gameplay

elements that have helped the long running series sell in excess of 2.5 million copies throughout the world. Looking at these few screen shots, it's clear that the fourth installment of the series is going to push the action/adventure genre on to new heights of horror and suspense - we can't wait!



Publisher Sega
Released TBA

Developer Silicon Dreams
Genre Sport Sim

Worldwide Soccer 2000

Be excited, be very excited... Football's coming home!

Since 1995, Silicon Dreams has been developing some of the greatest football games around. From Fever Pitch to the World League Soccer brand, the company has been achieving consistent 90 per cent-plus scorelines and honing its production skills to the max.

Thus, you know you're guaranteed some pretty hard-core gameplay, but there's more on offer from Worldwide Soccer 2000 than that. While the game already runs at a constant 50 frames per second with no slowdown, Silicon Dreams also promises an ultra-fast response for control. For help in getting to grips with the intuitive control method, you'll also find two different levels of control - basic and advanced. This creates a balanced learning curve making sure you can eventually pull off the dozens of special moves, combinations and other realistic techniques at your disposal.

But what about how it's going to look? Each character is set to utilise 2,500 polygons, making them the most detailed of any football game ever. If that wasn't enough, they also feature



intricate football strips, each using a 16-bit true colour palette (that's 65,000 colours per player, no less!). There are numerous weather conditions that not only look fantastic, but actually change the course of play, interacting with your players and the CPU opponents.

Worldwide Soccer 2000 is also among the first games to feature wide-screen TV compatibility too, but we'll have details of this and much more when we get our hands on some playable code.



WORLDWIDE SOCCER 2000

stadiums

There can't be any doubt that Worldwide Soccer 2000 has the most intricately detailed and realistic stadiums we've seen. Even though these screenshots look amazing, you've also got to take into consideration the animated crowds, stewards, flags flying, realistic crowd chants and other spot effects.



Highbury



Old Trafford



Wembley Stadium, don't you just love it?



Publisher Activision
Released 6th January 2000

Developer Luxiflux
Genre Driving



Vigilante 8: Second Offense

Insane automobile action!



of completely over-the-top characters, as well as ridiculously-powerful weapons and power-ups to blow them away with.

Using a brand-new morphing technique, each of the 18 '70s-style cars can be upgraded and modified to suit the terrain and objectives of the game. Also, expect four-player carnage when it's released in early January, but we'll tell you more next month in our four-page Loading preview after we've seen the game and interviewed the development team.



Publisher Fox Interactive
Released Q2 2000

Developer Teeny Weeny
Genre Driving

World's Scariest Police Chases: Deadly Pursuit

Get ready for some wicked skidmarks (in yer pants)...



We've all seen it on TV: nuttier drivers speeding around the highways and byways risking life and limb at the wheel of their car - and that's just the police. Deadly Pursuit sees you in the driving seat of a flash new cop car with 75 missions waiting to test your skills, reactions and, most of all, your bladder! There are multiple cars and weapons at your disposal as you attempt to clear the streets of

dangerous joy-riding scum and the game will come complete with running commentary, dynamic camera angles and plenty of multiplayer modes to keep you coming back for more. Helicopters with news cameras hover overhead to bring you action replays in a true news broadcast manner. But to top it all off, the cities featured are the largest and most detailed ever to feature in a videogame. Hold on until next issue to find out more.



Publisher Infogrames
Released 14th May 2000

Developer Accolade
Genre Racing

Test Drive 6

The greatest driving game in the world
ever...volume six...

One of the world's longest running driving game series' is coming to Dreamcast for a Summer release. It's set to feature 39 fully licensed vehicles, with different skins (paint-jobs) and five different upgradeable attributes. Cars will also be placed into different classes each utilising different physics engines to give them a different driving style.

To match the huge number of cars on offer in Test Drive 6, there are 30 courses set in various locations around the world. Each feature breakable objects (like tables and chairs outside cafés etc.), random road obstacles and short cuts as tight as a gnat's arse.

Well be going into more detail on Test Drive 6 next issue as part of our exclusive Infogrames feature, so sit tight until then...



Publisher Midway
Released March 2000

Developer Kalisto
Genre Racing

4 Wheel Thunder

Tear up the track!

TOTAL TIME :
0' 43"760
BEST LAP TIME :
0' 00"000
LAP TIME :
0' 43"760



Here's your chance to experience some real rough riding, Dreamcast-style! 4 Wheel Thunder is set to offer 12 huge, detailed tracks across six real-world locations utilising varying weather and time conditions. Buggies, Monster Trucks, Jeeps and Quad Bikes are on offer, and you'll feel every undulation under your wheels thanks to four-wheel independent suspensions. Watch out next month for a full preview, but it looks like Midway's on to a winner here, so stay tuned...



Publisher Sega
Released Spring 2000

Developer Sega
Genre FREE

Shenmue Chapter 1: Yokosuka

With its immense processing power, the Dreamcast is perfectly suited to run a game of epic proportions. And Shenmue, Sega's highly anticipated adventure/RPG, looks set to be an epic in every sense of the word...



SHENMUE CHAPTER 1: YOKOSUKA

Yu Suzuki - the genius

To understand the pedigree behind Shenmue, you only need to take a look at its creator, Yu Suzuki. This Japanese gaming legend shot to fame after creating the best-selling Virtua Fighter series. One of the most successful series of Sega games ever, Virtua Fighter first saw the light of day in 1993. And in 1996, Virtua Fighter 3, the fast game from the series, was born. But Suzuki's roots lie in the creation of racing games. It was he who developed arcade hit Outrun and motorcycle simulation, Hang On. While developing Shenmue, Suzuki incredibly found time to work on a brand-new racing game called Ferrari F355. Although this will initially be launched into the arcades, a Dreamcast conversion is a definite possibility. Keep your eyes peeled for that one!



INcredibly, even the characters' fingers can move in real-time

ollowing the unveiling of a playable version of Shenmue at the Electronic Entertainment Expo in Los Angeles earlier this year, its true greatness fell like a ton of bricks on the world's gaming press.

Formerly codenamed Project Berkley, Shenmue has been developed by Sega's leading arcade producer, Yu Suzuki. It was conceived five years ago by Suzuki, but was shelved after he felt no hardware was capable of making his inspiration a reality. Now, however, the Dreamcast is bringing his dream to life in the form of a game that is rumoured to be spread across four 1Gb discs. It was rumoured to be a Virtua Fighter RPG spin-off, but now its details have been revealed it's actually a totally original game.

Shenmue's story is a period epic, intended to be one of love, sadness, romance and humanity, reflecting real-life behaviour and values. Set in Japan and China, the game will feature characters that live within their own timeline, each operating on a different schedule with different roles in life.

The player assumes the role of Ryo Hazuki, a young guy whose main aim in life is to solve the mystery of his father's death. The date is winter 1986, and you start your quest in a port town called Yokosuka going on to encounter numerous characters, challenges and adventures as you



progress. And, as in the real world, the landscapes will change as time passes, responding realistically to the time of day and weather.

As you roam around Shenmue's enormous world, you will be able to explore literally thousands of rooms and interact with over 500 characters around the game's real-time changing environments. You will get to travel around the world visiting vast locations and panoramic vistas. Until now, creating such huge locations was impossible on a console so this is truly innovative stuff.

In one location, for example, you find yourself in Kowloon Castle, Hong Kong. Rather than exploring small, individual areas, which is what is usually offered, you are given free rein to walk around over 1,200 rooms.

Also highly unusual for this type of game is the ability to enjoy full interaction with the surroundings - another unique touch in Shenmue. Players can touch and use items such as phones and tape recorders, for example. And the game is being designed to be as realistic as possible. If you're tired or hungry, Ryo, as in reality, will have to use

money to buy food or find lodgings. And in order to earn money, you have to find a part-time job by interacting with other characters! In one sequence, you can actually work as a forklift truck driver. And with this, you actually control the forklift truck as Ryo gets to work earning his hard-earned cash.

When it comes to gameplay, Shenmue is set to be just as innovative as other areas of the game. As in Zelda 64, you will encounter passages of time and experience weather control. The game will actually keep a record of what season it is, causing it to be sunny, or to start raining or snowing.

The game will be controlled largely with the Dreamcast's analogue stick, but buttons will come into play, in particular for the fighting sequences that are incorporated into the game. This part of Shenmue will turn the whole thing into a kind of Dragon's Lair heat-up, where you have controls for kick and punch. But you must also run when the game instructs you to. With Yu Suzuki being the creator of Virtua Fighter, you'd expect this area to be impressive. And, from what we've seen, it really is. There are rumours that a special Virtua Fighter-like mode will be added to the game before its release.

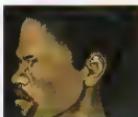
Graphically, Shenmue looks absolutely awesome. It pushes the

Dreamcast hardware further than ever before. Animated characters will be brought to life with motion-captured moves from professional actors. And, despite some of these screenshots looking like pre-rendered shots, they are actually real-time animation.

Incredibly, even the characters' fingers can move in real-time. And the game's fighting sequences have been motion-captured from professional Budo experts, based on a Chinese martial art called Hakkoyu-ken.

The game is being developed to behave just like a Hollywood movie. Bernard Stolar, President and CEO of Sega of America, commented: "Shenmue will be a real-life experience that will rival a Hollywood movie in its visual quality, dynamic storyline and ability to evoke true emotion in the player."

If all goes to plan, Shenmue will undoubtedly be one of the must-have games for the Dreamcast. Expect a release sometime in Spring 2000.



SHENMUE IS A PERIOD EPIC OF LOVE, SADNESS AND ROMANCE, REFLECTING, REAL-LIFE BEHAVIOUR AND VALUES

SHENMUE CHAPTER 1: YOKOSUKA

from dusk till dawn

Everything in Yu Suzuki's masterpiece takes place in real time, and that includes the time of day, as you can see from these screenshots...



Publisher Eidos
Released November

Developer Core Design
Genre Action

Fighting Force 2

The SI-COPS are back!



FIGHTING FORCE 2

What the makers say

Fighting Force 2 expands on its predecessor, incorporating new elements of strategy and a more varied style of gameplay. It includes hand-to-hand combat, awesome weaponry and a brand-new element of stealth. Play is fast-paced and designed to push the player into increasingly frantic situations.



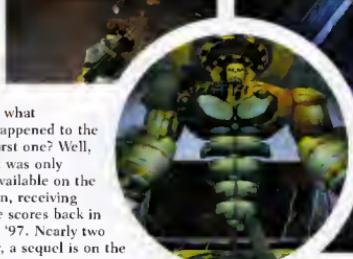
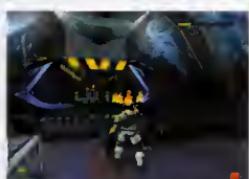
So what happened to the first one? Well, it was only available on the PlayStation, receiving reasonable scores back in December '97. Nearly two years later, a sequel is on the way for Dreamcast...

Story

The story behind Fighting Force 2 isn't known by the player at the outset. As you progress, the plot unfolds with the aid of integrated cut sequences and FMV. Ultimately, though, it's your task, as Hawk Manson, to reach the Nackamichi Corporation HQ and destroy a dangerous Cyborg then trash the

super-computer's data banks so it can't be rebuilt.

One of the greatest improvements Fighting Force 2 promises over its PSX predecessor is the remarkable character AI. There are a total of 50 different intelligent character types in the game, all of which are knowledgeable about their surroundings and its layout. Should



you appear a threat to these characters, they react accordingly. They might attack, run for cover or even trigger alarm systems to bring help. Should you watch your step, however, it's entirely possible to get through certain sections of the game without pulling the trigger. Watch out next month for our full review, but for now these lovely screenshots should suffice...

THE PLOT UNFOLDS WITH THE AID OF INTEGRATED CUT SEQUENCES AND FMV

Publisher Fox Interactive
Released 02 2000

Developer
Genre Vishware Software
Action Adventure

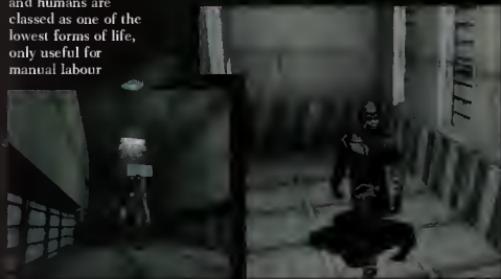
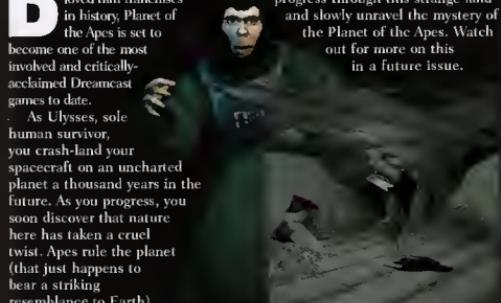
Planet of the Apes

They finally did it!

Based on one of the world's best known and loved film franchises in history, Planet of the Apes is set to become one of the most involved and critically-acclaimed Dreamcast games to date.

As Ulysses, sole human survivor, you crash-land your spacecraft on an uncharted planet a thousand years in the future. As you progress, you soon discover that nature here has taken a cruel twist. Apes rule the planet (that just happens to bear a striking resemblance to Earth), and humans are classed as one of the lowest forms of life, only useful for manual labour.

and scientific experiments. In a bid for your own survival, you must progress through this strange land and slowly unravel the mystery of the Planet of the Apes. Watch out for more on this in a future issue.



WARNING!



DON'T GET CAUGHT CHEATING
Testing Commences
23rd December

dreamcast
strategy

loading

Deep Fighter

We go below deck at Criterion to discover Deep Fighter...

Publisher Ubi Soft
Released March 2000

Developer Criterion
Genre Action/Adventure

With over five months to go before completion, Deep Fighter, developed by Criterion on both PC and Dreamcast, is already gaining more attention than most. Few similar games combine action and adventure with threads of strategy, together with leading edge technology. With its compelling underwater setting and a gripping and diverse storyline, we were eager to find out more about exactly what Deep Fighter offers. Derek dela Fuente, our man on the spot, visited the team and spoke to three key members to get a full low-down...

Jim Hill, an integral part of the Criterion team, was eager to give an overview of the game. He pointed out that as this is a game full of ideas, including varying game genres and contrasting settings, it's nigh-on impossible to convey the real essence of Deep Fighter without seeing it live.

The player assumes the role of a rookie sub-pilot, fresh from the academy, who must take on a series of missions from finding simple objects to defending large areas. One partial



gameplay. It has puzzle solving, which comes in many forms, combat and even resource management and above all some tasty shooting segments".

It becomes apparent straight away that the team could get away with a really nice shooter with their fabulous graphics, but they wanted to offer more. As Jim explained, "The whole plot revolves around three warring factions; the Defence Force, with which you're a rookie, Silents, which are organic life forms, and Pirates, who are humanoid characters. We have brought in a leading French author called Hervé Tautou, who has written the story, giving the game a rich tapestry of thought-provoking ideas and a plot to enthrall the players. Deep Fighter is about immersing the player in the underwater world, so giving a strong story to the game was essential".



and the water pressure changes the current's flow, having an effect on your sub and the way you control it. There are many knock-on effects from what you do, so you must take care before you execute an action. The whole area you're in is interactive. If your sub hits a rock or an underwater dome, it takes damage. The team is trying to portray a world that's plausible. We've also drawn on games such as Indiana Jones, which manifests in the puzzles, to give a rich Tomb Raider-esque quality".



Bob Churchill



Jim Hill



Derek dela Fuente



Jim Hill

THE TEAM COULD GET AWAY WITH A REALLY NICE SHOOTER WITH THEIR FABULOUS GRAPHICS

aim is to climb the ladder of authority. The enemies you face are devious and the uncharted waters present the player with so many surprises you're gradually pulled into a plot that is wholly unique.

Jim tried to define the game. "Deep Fighter is an action-based adventure exploration combat game, but it also encapsulates many other game genres. Being set under water gives it a very organic, live and fresh look, one that other developers have not previously explored". Why go underwater? "We wanted to immerse the player and present a 3D world that was rich in appearance, but huge and open-ended, with freedom to explore. Being set in the future, we could use real-life physics and AI for the creatures, based on the real research we've done, plus add other factors to give added

Inspired

Bob Churchill, the game's designer, pointed out where some of its inspiration came from. "Star Fox had nice, simple combat elements, but we wanted to take them a step further in Deep Fighter. Whereas that was in space, we are now under water so we can add lots of graphically-intensive scenes and ensure the player is constantly looking around and taking everything in. Being in space, Star Fox offers a black void with only swarms of fighters to be seen. In Deep Fighter, you can hide behind rocks, venture into caves, interact with the many organic creatures, explore crevices and even find hidden areas. It's the many distinct touches that give the game an extra dimension, like an underwater earthquake where you see rocks fall



loading



DEEP FIGHTER

complex

Deep Fighter is a complex tale of intrigue and betrayal that unfolds to reveal the true secret of the player's existence on Earth. The game's mission structure evolves as it progresses, being more linear at the start but more free-form towards the end.

THE MANY DISTINCT TOUCHES GIVE THE GAME AN EXTRA DIMENSION

inventive

With so many ideas you could easily wonder what the game is all about. In effect, you take control of your underwater submarine with a first-person view, which can, at any time, be changed to 3rd-person chase perspective to give a fuller view of the playing area. There are

six realistic environments; The Abyss (a dangerous location with crevices and undulated sections), Paradise (a tropical and sandy area with volcanic landscapes), Egyptian influences and puzzles with a hieroglyphics focus), Rockpool (tropical rain forest looks with shallows pools where you can move onto dry land for short periods) and more. Each has a very strong look, with sub-sections and even mini-games to ensure it never lacks a focus for the player. This is a game of Good Vs Bad, where you must

defend your own, whilst droids are constructing a mothership to take your civilisation away to safety but

aggressive enemies forces are out to stop you at all cost.

Going Down

At the start of each mission, you're given a briefing and must achieve it to move to the next. You even notice some Wing Commander influences, with realms of FMV to convey a stronger immersive feel to the game. Deep Fighter doesn't have a linear path, but has

DEEP FIGHTER

the deal

The overall objective is to build the mothership and save your civilisation. The impending doom (the destruction of your landscape) is shown visually with lava eruptions, cracks splitting across the seabed and rockslides.

many branching factors and incidents going on elsewhere, so you could easily be called away to another mission to aid one of your team before completing the original mission.

Once in your submarine, which is customisable with an extensive array of weapons and even attack moves, you see large fish and mutant ocean marine life moving around. This wildlife is constantly evolving, and most is focused on its own tasks, oblivious to you. If you want to react and shoot at them, you can use the onboard guns. Shoot them and the water becomes misted with blood, but unprovoked attacks could disturb the fine ecosystem! Shooting lots of fish attracts a giant shark-like creature that can smell blood from miles away. Once it finds the bloody area, you find you're its prey!

Puzzles

Defending your world and keeping the colony safe from other predators is the prime objective, although there are some really clever little puzzles to ensure the game never becomes stale.

FORETHOUGHT & CONSIDERATION OF YOUR OPPONENT'S STRENGTHS MUST BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT



With the game comes a novella, and reading this not only sets the scene but also gives you vital information. Put in its simplest form, you must ensure the war effort runs smoothly. Looking after an area is essential, so mining resources are constantly being assessed. If you hear news that a mine is under attack, it's best to see if you can end the confrontation before you complete the objective you're working towards.

Why are you underwater, you may wonder? It's simply because the precious minerals and resources needed for survival are there, but being in this open expanse throws up endless gameplay options. Deep Fighter even offers its own mirror image of Half-Life, the massive PC game where a story was interwoven with the action. Here you must manoeuvre your craft precariously around rock formations to find the enemy. If any rocks start to fall, fire at them and they break up. Graff Jenkins, the Assistant Producer, elaborated on events. "You must unlock an entrance, discovering a new cave network, skipping over a rock barrier on the surface, diving further into the deep with your enhanced hull strength or

entering high caves when the tide is right. Another cool resource feature is that you constantly need to ensure an area is well stocked with fish. You must search around for a female fish by getting hints and tips from fellow NPCs and, via special suckers on your sub, pull it towards you and hook it with a line. Because the fish is bigger than your vessel, it propels you in a different direction, so you must use your dart gun to stun it until you've placed it in the area with the male fish so they can breed to ensure the proper ecological balance".

Intelligent

The AI is impressive, so I allowed Jim Hill to go a little deeper: "There's AI and behaviour patterns for every living creature in the game, be it baby fish following their parents or attack patterns of numerous crabs, spiders or jellyfish. Then there are the Pirates and the Silents, which I'm definitely not getting into. We've incorporated a variety of enemies and organic life, all with different behaviour patterns.

Enemies attack and react differently to one another, as well as to particular situations, thus creating certain styles of battle. This is the same for fish and other organic life. For example, they won't stick around and get slaughtered like lemmings if they sense danger. Options are open to enemies, governed by rules and situations. For example, an enemy scout ship flees and contacts reinforcements if he's out-gunned or his damage is high".



Bottom Line

What makes Deep Fighter such an interesting game? It gives an experience that can be enjoyed by many players. The game builds as you play, and this is even highlighted by the soundtrack that musically builds to a crescendo when the action is constant, and silent and eerie music is played when you're in an area where there's less going on. Deep Fighter has lots of shooting; it has combat where forethought and consideration of your opponent's strengths must be taken into account. Could the opposition be too strong? Can you risk taking damage and having to return to base for repairs, or is it worth risking going for the jugular? There's also a diversity in the many vehicles you control, each giving extra gameplay. There are hidden levels as well as 15 secret weapons. The higher the rank the player achieves, the better the weapons and vehicles.

In Deep Fighter you never see the player you assume, although you see and talk with your two so-called wingmen. The predominant view is from the cockpit, although if your vessel takes too much damage, you eject and see yourself swimming and waiting to be picked up by a rescue vehicle. The controls are very straightforward, with intuitive use of the pad. The only debate at present is regarding the differences between the PC and Dreamcast versions, which have yet to be decided. The PC version offers more resource management, but whether this is in the Dreamcast game is unclear.

DEEP FIGHTER

YOU

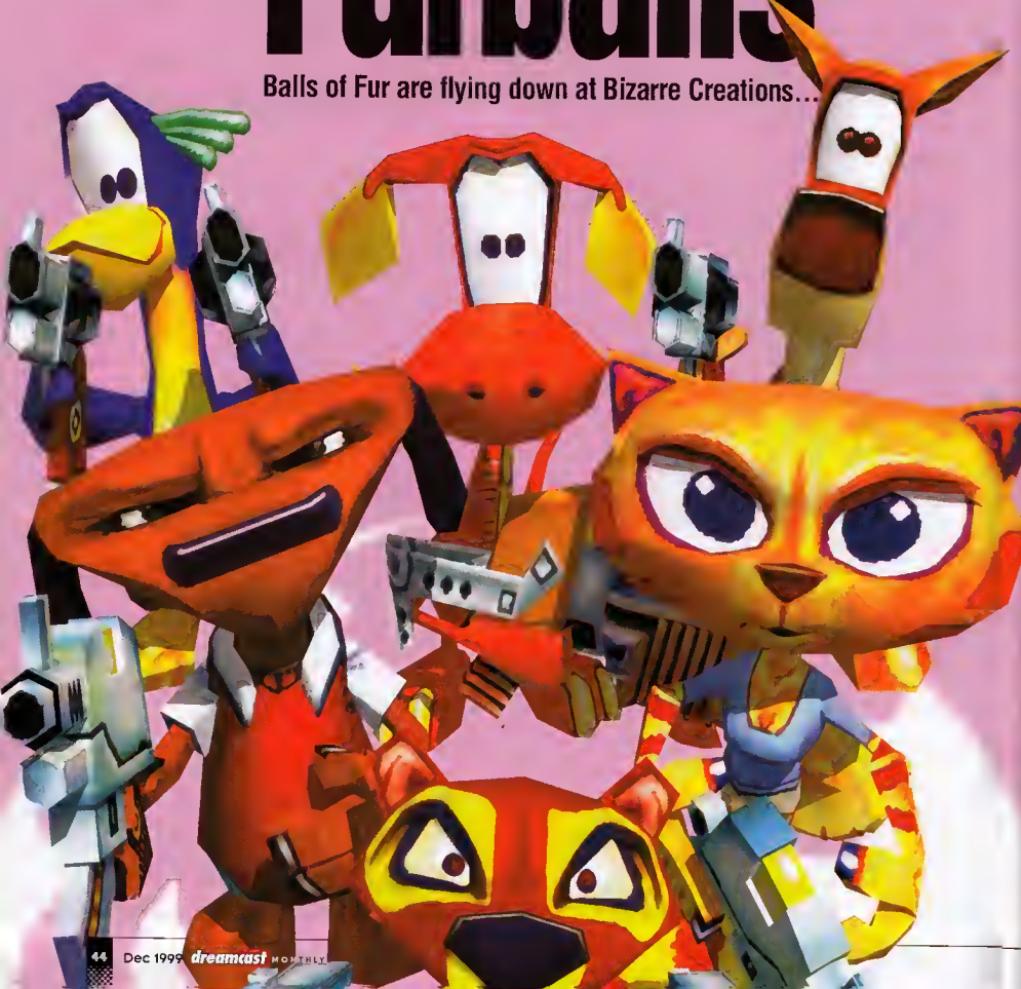
You're a private in the specialist defence force called The Deep Fighters, just out of the academy and thrust into the throes of battle. Work your way up through the ranks, command other subs and pilot the numerous sub-aquatic vehicles at your disposal. Do your almost to defend the mining installations, tend off predators and ultimately help save your race. Non-playable characters play a big part in the game, coming and helping you out if you're in trouble whilst doing their own thing, which has a real effect on the game. The NPCs react to events in any area, so they're certainly not stupid. Drop precious minerals and they grab it.



loading

Furballs

Balls of Fur are flying down at Bizarre Creations...



Publisher Acclaim Entertainment | Developer Bizarre Creations

Released Q1 2000

Genre Action/Adventure



Bizarre Creations is one of a dying number of teams that prize passion and creativity above all else. Only two of Furballs' developers have worked on a game before, and that's no accident. They've taken on dishwashers, shelf-stackers and even accountants. The only common factor amongst team members is they're all hard-core gamers.

Bizarre's first title was the classic Commodore 64 shooter, Combat Crazy. From there they went on to produce many top Mega Drive titles including Fatal Rewind, Wiz 'n' Liz and The Killing Game Show. More recently they found fame through a string of Formula One games, most notably the multi-million-selling PlayStation sim, Formula 1, published by Psygnosis.

Now the team look set to continue its success with Sega, through its forthcoming titles, Metropolis Street



Racer and Furballs. The former already looks set to redefine the racing genre, but for now it's very closely guarded. Furballs, however, is open to view, and what a pleasant view it is.

The plot so far...

A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away, the furballs were part of a crack commando unit assigned to banish the evil General Vego who was bent on world domination. They succeeded, and Vego was sent packing. But he's back, and with his corporation, Vego Industries, he once again plans to take over the world.

FURBALLS

conceptual insanity

In case you haven't realised, with Furballs, Bizarre Creations has really lived up to its name. No member of the team could be described as "normal", but Jeff, their concept artist, is probably the most disturbed. He was responsible for creating a catalogue of characters and scenes, from which the game's actual cast and backgrounds were picked. The surreal creativity crammed into this huge file is difficult to explain, but if you were to dump Eddie Izzard on an alien planet with a hellish�ogenic diet, he might start drawing pictures like these.



THERE'S A MASS OF BULLET-HUNGRY GUYS IN THE GAME

The only difference is this time, in a bid to get the Furballs out of his way, he's kidnapped all their families (he's obviously no genius). So Furballs is the tale of six furry creatures going out with a large army to rescue all their families and stop Vego once and for all.

Okay, so it's not the most sophisticated of plots, but it does the job.

Baby Boom

In a nutshell, the aim of the game is to take out the bad guys and rescue your families, solving puzzles of increasing complexity along the way. There are 18 huge levels altogether, and four to six babies to find in each (it's clear what they've been doing since they last defeated Vego - they sure know how to celebrate!).

FURBALLS

gunning for glory



Action adventure? "Violent adventure" might be a more accurate label. The weapons available, although not as original as the jurballs themselves, are just as much fun. There's the pistol, shotgun, machine gun, grenade launcher, rocket launcher, plasma gun, buzzsaw, smart gun, tonerly known as the BFG. So it's okay to go around shooting endangered species, as long as the gun is politely named...



loading

FURBALLS

furballs forever

For us, the gem of the game has to be its characters. They're all superbly animated and packed with individuality. They're also utterly insane (Not unlike their creators).

Chang was originally going to be a hamster, but ended up as a fox, or a Chinese red panda. He's just like a panda, but only a couple of feet high. As the smallest character, he can squeeze into spaces the others can't.

Rufus is a Scottish hare. He's the oldest character and the leader of the furballs. His special skill

involves tunnelling under the ground to areas none of the other characters can reach.

Juliet is a French cat. She's a bit of a loner and quite arrogant (not something we would say about all French people). She can also climb up many surfaces the other characters can't.

Bunglow the kangaroo is, allegedly, very stupid. They had to change him from the concept drawings, where he looks very similar to Scooby Doo. His special skill is the ability to jump twice as high as the other characters.

Tweak is a two-day-old baby Welsh dragon. He's the runt of the litter, but is still ten times bigger than all the others. He can't fly yet, but he can glide a bit, which is a great advantage.

Riko is an Argentinian penguin who tangles himself as a bit of a John Wayne. His special ability allows him to swim underwater, whereas the others can only swim on the surface.



The game is also split into six missions, with their own graphical themes. Each holds a boss character, which is a genetically-mutated spouse or mother of one of the characters. Once defeated, the spell is reversed and they return to their normal (ish) selves.

Within each of the six areas, all the babies have to be rescued before you can enter the boss arena.

Defeating the boss allows you to pass to the next mission and graphical theme. There are also a hundred tokens in each level, of which you have to collect around 80 before you can move on. Ultimately, the babies and tokens are just a new twist on the standard coin, note or star affair. The idea is to make sure you don't skip over large sections of the game, while not hampering your progress too much. And it serves its purpose with style.

Fashionable Foes

There's a mass of bullet-hungry bad guys in the game, and they're all as imaginatively designed as the furballs themselves. They also dress the part. From construction site overalls to Mafia-style suits, they all have an outfit for every theme in the game.

The standard trooper is the brown bear, and there are two variations: the machine gun-toting polar bear and the small pistol-packing black bear. Then there's the desert fox who carries twin pistols John Woo-style, and tracks you wherever you go. Less intelligent but no less effective are the crocs; they don't have weapons, but their powerful jaws inflict plenty of damage. And finally, the peacocks fan out their tails just to let you know there's a rocket or two coming your way.

But these evil animals are only obeying orders. The real brain of the bad guys is Vego, the Furballs equivalent of Blofeld from Bond. Instead of a large bald man with a small white cat, he's a large white cat with a small bald man. And the little

WITH ACTION ADVENTURES, SIZE MATTERS, AND FURBALLS LOOKS SET TO BE A HEAVYWEIGHT



FURBALLS

mental mentor

During your mission you meet two old friends from your previous battle against Vego. There's your former drill sergeant, who guides you through various sub-games, and there's also your mentor, who is no longer with us, but has returned Obi-Wan Kenobi-style to give advice during your quest (sometimes reliable, sometimes not).



THIS COULD REALLY BE SOMETHING SPECIAL

man is, of course, called Fifi. Once discovered, Vego can only be defeated by using all the special skills of each character in a team effort.

The developers are particularly proud of the amount of bad guys they can get on screen at the same time. This allows for some satisfying shoot-outs and keeps the action moving along nicely. There are still more bad guys to be added, and I just hope they're as fine as these.

Larging It

With action adventure games, size matters, and Furballs certainly looks set to be a heavyweight. Having said that, without playing the finished game, this is only a well educated guess. With 18 levels across six graphical themes, the numbers aren't unprecedented, but when completed, their scale and complexity may well be. To analyse each level could take an entire magazine, but these examples should give you some idea of what to expect.

The Space Centre mission is a frantic race to construct and launch a shuttle. First, all the pieces must be found and the bad guys taken out. Then you can climb in your fully-laden aircraft carrier and race another Vego Corporation carrier to the launch site. If successful, you're launched into space and board the Meier Cat-run Mia Space Station.

The following level brings you back down to Earth, but only in the physical sense. You discover a lost Dinosaur world. But the dinosaurs have evolved as we have, and live in a sort of 1950s vision of the future. Everything is well out of scale, and the entire stage is set in one house. The dinosaurs have many toys, such as tanks and toy vehicles, which are just the right size for you to play with.

Then the final mission begins amongst Indiana Jones-style temple



ruins. And from here the tale begins to twist. Just as you're finishing off the last of the evil army, Vego decides to sacrifice a baby and bring all his troopers back from hell. This is your cue to go directly to hell in a quest to rescue the young victim.

The final stage is a big Bond finale, and surely the most imaginative portion of the game. But it's based on a series of surprises, and I don't want to spoil it for you. If development continues in the same intoxicating vein of ingenuity, this could really be something special.



interview

WITH BIOWARE IN THE CHAIR

The follow-up to MDK for the Dreamcast is being taken on by Canadian developer BioWare (of Baldur's Gate fame). We spoke with Greg Zeschuk, joint CEO of BioWare Corp. and co-executive producer on MDK2 to get an insight into the new cast and direction of MDK2...

Writing a sequel can never be easy, especially when you had nothing to do with the first game. What was your basic brief considering the difficulties in venturing too far away from the original ethos of the game or making nothing more than a carbon copy?

"BioWare's first goal with MDK2

was to create a sequel that would move the story on. We wanted to expand on the original game by adding a new cast of characters rather than diverging significantly from the solid concepts of the original MDK. By allowing the player to take the role of Kurt, Max and Doctor Hawkins - as well as giving each character unique powers - we set out to increase the

**WE SET TO INCREASE THE VARIETY
IN MDK2 WELL BEYOND THE
AVERAGE VIDEOGAME OFFERING**

MDK2

variety in MDK2 well beyond the average videogame offering.

"Another goal for MDK2 was to also add significant storytelling in the form of in-game cut scenes and movies. MDK had a wonderful back-story that was never really revealed during the game. Our goal is

to make sure that everyone understands the characters and their motivation whilst having a good time watching some humorous cut scenes*.

Is it a dream?

BCM Does the Dreamcast really offer more potential for a game like MDK2 with its PC-based architecture?

GREG "Our original platform was primarily the PC, but we have considered various console versions since the initial conception of the project. We decided on Dreamcast because of its power and ease of use in the development process. We certainly



**GREG
ZESCHUK**

haven't been disappointed with the result. In addition, Sega has been wonderful with regard to its support during development.

"We've been developing the PC and Dreamcast versions simultaneously rather than finishing one and then porting it back to the other platform. We don't want to have one version totally overshadow the other as often happens on multi-platform games. We've been particularly careful to add features that console players are familiar with to the Dreamcast version and also to make sure the PC version is up to the usual PC game standards. For example, the Dreamcast allows only saving between levels, but it has multiple checkpoints during the level. The PC version, on the other hand, allows for saving anywhere on a level (like most PC games). The Dreamcast version has VMU support - there are various images that pop up during the game on the VMU depending on current events. Each version is carefully crafted to fit within the respective established system standards.

"There is a good crossover between the PC and Dreamcast and so we primarily use 3D Studio Max, a leading PC package for graphics and modelling, as a development tool, but we've also made a number of custom plug-ins to assist in the development process in

THE DREAMCAST OFFERS SOME TOTALLY AWESOME TECHNICAL FEATURES THAT MAKE IT A 'DREAM' FOR DEVELOPMENT

MDK2. Most of our content is first made and tested on PC while the code is done concurrently on the PC and Dreamcast. It's a pretty interesting process.

"The Dreamcast offers some totally awesome technical features that make it a 'dream' for development (sorry, just couldn't resist) including the texture and sound compression that is built into its hardware. Depending on the size of the textures we use we can have up to 32Mb of texture memory loaded (with real-time compression) - this exceeds what even most PCs can handle. An additional nice feature is the modifier volumes that allow us to project shadows from characters and even objects in the environment. It gives us some of the most advanced shadows in the biz".

Like it! Love it!

DCM So you love the Dreamcast without any reservations?

GREG "Yep," replied Greg, "it's a really powerful console system. We don't think of it at all as a 'PC in a box'. When you

put a dedicated game controller in your hand and attach a system to a TV something magical happens (I think it also has to do with being able to lay down on a sofa while playing a game!). From a speed and power perspective I would certainly say that the Dreamcast is at least comparable with high-end PC systems. The MDK2 render engine is the equivalent in performance to a P3-500!"

DCM But surely there are some limiting features or restrictive specs that have caused you sleepless nights?

GREG "You have to think about the broader picture. I think these days you really need to have solid grounding in technology for your games to even just reach the quality bar. You need a great engine, team and tools to push things both cosmetically and in gameplay. At BioWare we always set out to make great games, so we don't like to skimp on any element, not matter what the cost. As long as a great game results it doesn't really matter to us if people overlook the details".



WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT MDK2 AND HEAR MORE FROM GREG? FLICK TO PAGE 26 FOR OUR PREVIEW

competition

dreamcast
MOTIF

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Go on, you know
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review con

Aero Wings 77

The Dreamcast's first flight sim is here. Find out how it measures up.

Buggy Heat 76

Action-packed racer, or unplayable tosh? I know what my money's on...

Dynamite Cop 66

Pure arcade action ahoy, courtesy of Sega's latest action/fighter.

F1 World Grand Prix 67

An official licence and Sega at the helm, sounds like a recipe for success.

Hydro Thunder 74

Turbo-charged racing boats and an adrenaline rush to remember.

Jimmy White's 2: Cueball 64

He might not have won the World Championship, but the game rocks!

Marvel versus Capcom 73

Is this 2D fighting at its very best? Better take a look...

Pen Pen 80

Ever fancied racing Pen Pots on crazy courses? Us neither...

Ready 2 Rumble Boxing 58

Boxing gets the 128 treatment. You'll laugh your way to a ten count.

Sega Bass Fishing 70

Sega's top-notch fishing sim is a real catch.

Soul Calibur 54

It's Soul Calibur and it's on page 54, what more do we need to say?

Soul Fighter 60

Rekindling the flame of the scrolling beat-'em-up.

Street Fighter Alpha 3 78

The never-ending series fights on...

Suzuki Alstare Extreme Racing 68

Your chance to be part of Suzuki's top racing team. Who can resist?

Tokyo Highway Challenge 71

Could this be the Dreamcast's answer to Ridge Racer?

Marvel versus Capcom 73

Is this 2D fighting at its very best? Better take a look...

Pen Pen 80

Ever fancied racing Pen Pots on crazy courses? Us neither...

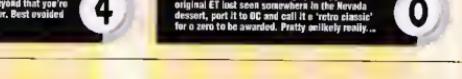
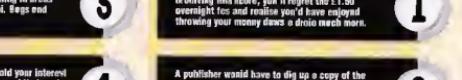
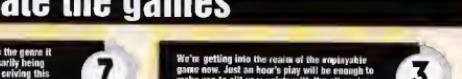
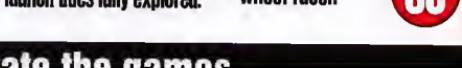
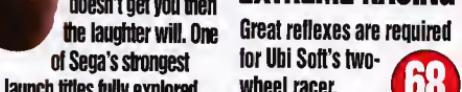
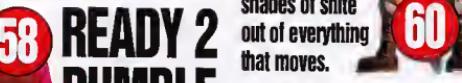
Ready 2 Rumble Boxing 58

Boxing gets the 128 treatment. You'll laugh your way to a ten count.

SOUL CALIBUR

54

The UK version is here! Surely it's the greatest game of all time? Check out our view on Page 54 and see what you think.



CASTING VOTE - How we rate the games

Dreamcast Monthly utilises a vast pool of hard-core game journalists. Our scoring system is fair and completely without bias to ensure complete reader satisfaction. Here's how it all works...

An above-average game that does the genre it represents justice without necessarily being particularly innovative. A game in serving this score may have a few niggles, but is an enjoyable experience nevertheless.

7

We're getting into the realms of the unplayable game now. Just on hear's play will be enough to make you wring your wrists with the otherwise redundant CD.

3

Don't expect to see a game awarded this prestigious mark in DCM very often. A score that's solely reserved for games made of the purest gold, fashioned into a valuable work of art.

10

Fines are starting to become more evident here - you'd have to be a fan of the genre to really appreciate a game of this quality's worth.

6

There's a fine line here between this and the next mark down. Perhaps the dire quality of the game's graphics/voice-overs gives you a laugh or two before it gets blamed.

2

It's not a rule, but in general this will be the highest mark you'll encounter in the magazine. Games of this quality are the reason you bought a Dreamcast in the first place.

9

Average games like these often have redeeming features, but will be seriously lacking in areas like longevity, gameplay or control. Bugs and glitches are most likely evident.

5

Complete and utter pants. Don't even rent games receiving this score, you'll regret the £1.50 overnight fee and realise you'd have enjoyed throwing your money down a drain much more.

1

An incredibly accomplished game that features some ingenious touches. Games awarded this mark have all the required components to keep the funniest player happy.

8

Critics awarded this mark might hold your interest for an evening or even two, but beyond that you're looking at a very expensive coaster. Best avoided unless you're a really flush git.

4

A publisher would have to dig up a copy of the original ET and snuck somewhere in the Nevada desert, port it to GC and call it a 'retro classic' for zero to be awarded. Pretty unlikely really...

0

tents

dreamcast
MONTHLY



PERIPHERALS

There are many peripherals available for the Dreamcast like the Vibration Pack, Steering Wheel and Gun Set to name but a few. We tell you what peripherals are compatible with the game you're looking at, and cover any other special requirements while we're at it.



INITIALLY

The first thing to look out for, beyond the name of the game, is this box designed to give you any first impressions we have.

You might have to sit through ten minutes of boring story before you get down to the action, or maybe the gameplay takes a while to get into - you can find out here.

INFORMATION

This section of the review speaks for itself. All vital background information is catered for here, from publisher to price.



VMU

Because the Visual Memory Unit plays an important role in a large number of Dreamcast games, we've decided to spare this space to talk about it. If there's more to learn, we'll let you know elsewhere.



COMING SOON

This section of a review is designed to inform you about a comparable game currently in the pipeline. It's just to let you know what's coming soon, just in case it's worth waiting for.

COMING SOON...

AS FAR AS WE KNOW THERE ARE NO OTHER GAMES ON THE WAY, BUT WE CAN'T GUARANTEE IF THIS ONE DEBUTS TOMORROW, DO NOT BUY A SUPERBIRD. THIS IS NOT RELEVANT. THIS IS NOT RELEVANT. THIS IS NOT RELEVANT.

TO FILL THIS SPACE.

SCORE BOX

This is our final word on the game in question. Any final comments, praises or complaints are carried out here, alongside our given score out of ten. Check out the rundown of how we rate the games while you're here - it's your guide to getting it right.





I personally found it a tight call between using the Joypad and the Arcade Stick, but there's nothing like holding your own sturdy knob, so that settles it really (easy, tiger! - Claire).

INITIALLY...

THERE'S NO DOUBT YOU CAN EXPECT GREAT THINGS FROM SOUL CALIBUR. JUST ONE LOOK AT THE GRAPHICS, THE PRESENTATION AND ITS MANY MODES IS ENOUGH TO LET YOU KNOW YOU'RE IN THE PRESENCE OF GREATNESS.



SOUL CALIBUR

This is it, this is the one. Fighting games will never be the same again...



COMING SOON...

SOUL CALIBUR

Dead or Alive 2

TECHNO BASCER IS STILL A FAIR WAY OFF AT THE MOMENT, BUT IT'S CLEAR THAT HE'S GOING TO STAKE A CLAIM TO SOUL CALIBUR'S CROWN. IT'S TOO EARLY TO JUDGE IT JUST YET, BUT SOME OF THE GAME'S CHARACTERS ARE PRETTY DAMN HOT. IF THAT'S ANYTHING TO GO BY!



Since we reviewed the Japanese version of Soul Calibur back in Issue One of DCM, the anticipation-o-meter has reached new heights while waiting for the UK version to arrive. It's been just three months, and here we are, once more reviewing the greatest game ever, regardless of genre or format. There's no point heating about the bush - DCM tries very hard to keep you well abreast of what's hot and what's not in the world of Dreamcast, so the chances are you know what's in store when Soul Calibur's released this month. To fair, though, we're going to reiterate the game's finer points for those unlucky enough to have missed our first review, and also explain the changes that have taken place during the game's conversion.

Namco Forever!

Let's first take a step back, however, and look at Namco. Look, for example, at what they did for the PlayStation. Two of the finest series to appear on the PSX (the Tekken trilogy and the



IT HAS THE SHARPEST GRAPHICS YOU'LL SEE THIS SIDE OF THE MILLENNIUM

Ridge Racer saga) came from the Namco stable, and were obviously instrumental in ensuring the console's success. Let's just take some time to reflect on this point and come to the conclusion that Namco could easily do just the same thing for Dreamcast. We all know it's the quality of the games that decides the success of a console, and it's clear Soul Calibur has all the potential to do just that.

Let's hope Namco continue to develop games of the same calibre (excuse the pun).



I think it's fair to say fighting games have never been renowned for their longevity, especially for a single player. They're generally marked on their special moves and the quality of graphic animations holding it all together. Frankly, though, it wouldn't matter if Soul Calibur had some very suspect graphics, as no game has ever come close to the quality of gameplay and challenge Namco has come up with for their slasher. The fact of the matter is, of course, that not only does it offer the best gameplay, the longest challenge and the most intuitive control system in the world today, it also has the sharpest, crispest graphics you'll see on a console this side of the Millennium. It's not often a game comes along that offers a gameplay experience above and beyond anything else, failing to fall short of expectations in any area whatsoever. In a funny kind of way, it's like Namco

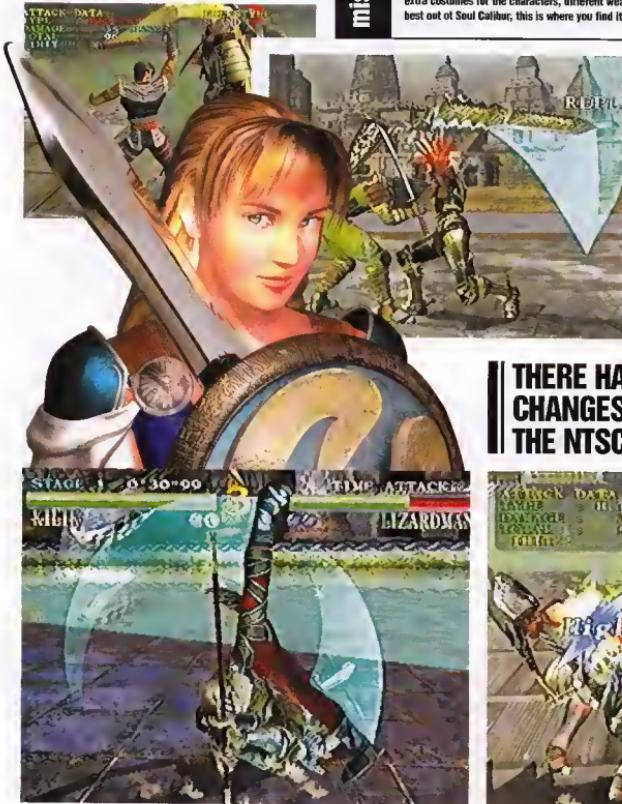


Publisher	Sega	Developer	Namco	Origin	UK	Genre	Beat-'em-up
Available	26th Nov 99	Players	1-2	Price	£39.99	Contact	0181 9953399



mission battle

Once you've got all the extra characters from the Arcade Mode, you're going to want a tougher challenge to keep you playing, and that's where Mission Battle comes in. This mode takes you on an around-the-world adventure, fighting many foes. Your reward for your troubles are points with which you can buy picture cards that, in turn, reveal extras for the game. These can come in the form of extra modes like Exhibition, Theatre and Opening Direction (where you can 'direct' an introduction sequence of your own). Other possible winnings include extra costumes for the characters, different weapons, new stages to fight on and many more. If you want to get the best out of Soul Calibur, this is where you find it, so get going - you've one hell of an adventure ahead of you!



putting up two fingers to Sega's Virtua Fighter 3rd (even though Sega is publishing Soul Calibur). Virtua Fighter 3rd was already relatively old before it was released on the Dreamcast, and compared to Namco's fighter, it looks like it was developed for old technology. There's no doubt that Virtua Fighter is a great game, but a comparison (side by side) really shows Sega's development team have been outperformed in every way by Namco - surely an embarrassment?

Eight Way Run

For example, Sega's fighter doesn't play in true 3D. Even though you can dodge around characters, you're not free to roam around the playing field as you can in Soul Calibur.

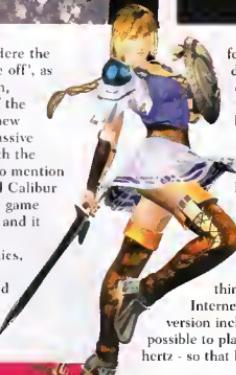
THERE HAVE BEEN VERY FEW CHANGES TO THE GAME DURING THE NTSC TO PAL CONVERSION





using the Eight Way Run. Here the battle isn't limited to a 'face off', as you can run in any direction, limited only by the edges of the ring. This opens up brand-new fighting opportunities (a massive 20 moves are associated with the Eight Way Run alone, not to mention combos). That really is Soul Calibur all over. Every aspect of the game has had no expense spared, and it really shows. Regardless of whether we're talking graphics, gameplay, control or even sound, it's perfectly executed and actually uses the Dreamcast's potential.

There have been very



few changes to the game during the NTSC to PAL conversion. You can take that statement whichever way you like, but as far as I'm concerned, it's not at all a bad thing that the original Japanese version has been left relatively intact. Though sub-menus and story sequences have all been translated, the speech remains as it was, as does the music score. The only thing that's really missing is the Internet options the Japanese version included, though it's now possible to play the game at either 50 or 60 hertz - so that kind of makes up for it. ■ ■ ■



REGARDLESS OF WHETHER WE'RE TALKING GRAPHICS, GAMEPLAY, CONTROL OR EVEN SOUND, IT'S PERFECTLY EXECUTED

dreamcast
MONTHLY

16-BIT TECHNOLOGY • ONLINE GAMING
100% UNOFFICIAL 100% UNBIASED 100% DREAMCAST

VERDICT

Let's be realistic. We all know there's going to be a sequel of some kind, so how can we give it 107 Angry Stars. The Internet modes featured in the Japanese version are missing, so it's not exactly perfect, but near enough.

9

Peripherals

Both analogs and digital can be used to move your boxer around the ring, but due to combs and succinct moves being an essential part of the gameplay, the d-pad easily outshines the stick.



INITIALLY...

THE UNMISTAKABLE GRITTY RESONANCE OF THE WORLD-FAMOUS MICHAEL BUBBLES "LET'S BET READY TO RUMBLE", AND YOU KNOW YOU'RE IN FOR A TREAT. MAJESTIC VISUALS AND AN INTUITIVE CONTROL SYSTEM SLAP A WET SPONGE IN THE FACE OF EVEN THE MOST FAULT FINDING GAMEPLAYER.

READY 2 RUMBLE

The makers of Defender take gaming into the Millennium.

READY 2 RUMBLE

Championship Mode is the single-player part of the game. You own a gym with three boxers, and you must fight each one through Bronze, Silver and Gold classes. Cash is awarded for every fight won, which in turn can be spent training up your boxers using various training methods. These methods vary from aerobics to weight lifting and involve the player entering into sequenced-based sub-games - perform the sequence correctly to build strength, stamina, dexterity and experience. These attributes are also increased after each winning fight, with title, prize and exhibition fights available to partake in. After each fighter has managed to attain the prestigious Gold Class, a new boxer is unlocked to take up the challenge as well. Seventeen boxers are available in all.



We are the champions

THIS STUNNING GAME SAVES FOR THE CHAMPIONSHIP MODE, BUT ALSO ALLOWS A PLAYER TO TAKE THEIR BOXER THROUGH A CAREER MODE TO GET SOME ASSISTANT COACHES WHILE THE GAME IS IN PROGRESS.

We've all discussed the dilemmas facing the Dreamcast, and we've given our opinions to anyone who's willing to listen. But one factor that every videogame buff agrees upon is that a console's lifespan is determined by the quantity and regularity of quality software. The N64 has given us many groundbreaking titles (Mario, Zelda, GoldenEye), but unfortunately not enough to sustain life in the old dog. Although many publishers and developers haven't yet committed to



MIDWAY HAS PRODUCED A GEM OF A GAME, AND THE OTHER DEVELOPERS ARE TAKING THE 'SUCKAPUNCH' RIGHT ON THE CHIN

Sega's new offspring, luckily for gameplayers around the world, a handful of accomplished gaming gurus have. Midway is one, and if it wasn't for its comical rendition of Queenslander's favourite sport, I personally feel that the Dreamcast's recent launch wouldn't

have been such an enormous success. Okay, we had the old favourites flying the 'quality software' flag for Sega (Sonic Adventure, Sega Rally and Virtua Fighter 3tb), but Ready 2 Rumble has really captured the hearts of Dreamcast owners. It's already been on the

COMING SOON...

SOUL CALIBUR RITS THE SHELVES ON THE 26TH NOVEMBER. IT'S REGARDED BY ANYONE WITH AN BOUNCE OF GAMING KNOWLEDGE AS THE FINEST HEAT 'EM-UP EVER PRODUCED FOR THE CONSOLE MARKET. FIND DCM'S PAL REVIEW ON PAGE 54.

READY 2 RUMBLE

Publisher Sega
Available Out Now

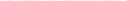
Developer Midway
Players 1-2

Origin UK
Price £39.99

Genre Sports Sim
Contact 0181 995 3399

READY 2 RUMBLE

To unlock all the classes without throwing a single punch, enter your gym name as "Rumble Power" to open Bronze, "Rumble Bumble" to open Silver, and "Pod 51" to open Gold.



prize tips

■ Ready 2 Rumble - getting bucket loads in the UK, and getting a future Dreamcast title.

■ Faz Motor isn't intimidatingly Jimmy Blood's tribal tattoos.



shelves for the past two weeks and is the only Dreamcast game to hold its own in the All Formats charts. Sonic Adventure smashed straight to the top spot, but slipped to 7 the following week; Sega Rally screeched in at 5 and then nose-dived to 11, and Virtua Fighter 3rd first week's (or should that be week?) punch landed at 20, with its second not even hitting the Top 20 target. Every other Dreamcast title hasn't performed as well as expected, but this really isn't due to the games being low-class or the console capabilities not being recognised. Midway has produced a gem of a game, and the other developers are taking the 'suckapunch' right on the chin.

Why is Ready 2 Rumble

So Good?

Big games smell of class as soon as you boot them up, and Ready 2 Rumble is a right stinker! The intro FMA gets ya gunshield quivering with a selection of the unorthodox boxers featured displaying their boxing abilities. The front-end menus are easy to digest - a simple 'Choose Your Game' or 'Game Options' gets you into the fray with your desired preferences.

Once in the ring, the infamous Michael Buffer gives the 2D - but animated - crowd the low-down on the two boxers involved. Whilst these are in full flow, close-ups of the cartoon pugilists communicate to the

gameplay that a bucket load of time has been spent animating every single characteristic of these guy and gals. Individual aspects of each of the fighter's face move in their own unique way, creating a personality for each character even before a single punch has been thrown - the varied body and muscle movements only reinforce the effect. The decision to represent the pugilists in this burlesque form, steering away from the sombre simulation appearance, can only be described as a revelation.

The cartoon arcade feel is continued throughout with a wealth of easy-to-learn moves for each boxer. Hard-core beat 'em-up fans will find the depth to pull off long combo led moves, while novices will love the pick-up-and-play accessibility. Ducks, sways and side-steps are at hand by pressing the appropriate

shoulder buttons, preventing the heat-'em-up's ugly cousin - the button-basher - from rearing its spotty face.

Lets Get Ready To...

Added fighting features to spruce up the proceedings include the RUMBLE. When either boxer lands a clean punch, depending on the power of the punch, letters of the word RUMBLE are awarded to that player. Once all the letters of the word have been accrued, the player can press both shoulder buttons simultaneously to make his or her boxing gloves glow for a short period of time. In this period, punches are thrown quicker making life for the opponent a lot harder.

Each boxer has two coloured bars at the top of the screen: the first is for overall energy and the second depicts punch power. The punch power bar decreases as punches are thrown (whether they connect or not), but increases quite rapidly back to full strength once the boxer has stopped his onslaught. This gives importance to the first series of punches thrown (it's futile with power behind it) and again stops button-bashing by the lazy gameplayer.

There are slight blemishes scattered throughout this game, but these are minor and lack of editorial space hails any further detailed dissection. It's an excellent game and that's all you really need to know. A glance at sales of the titles shows Dreamcast owners have already accepted Ready 2 Rumble with open arms, and until the brilliant Soul Calibur appears on the shelves, I can't see this changing.



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VERDICT

An easy control system, glorious graphics and exceptional sound effects will suck in even the most fickle of gameplayers. A plethora of unlockable characters and classes quickly to easily the best Dreamcast title available at this moment.

9

INITIALLY...

THERE ARE A WEALTH OF MOVES AT YOUR DISPOSAL AND SOME CRACKING SOUND AND VISION TO TIE IT ALL TOGETHER. AFTER PLAYING THROUGH THE FIRST TWO LEVELS, I NOW KNOW IT'S GOING TO TAKE A PAIR OLD TIME TO CRACK THIS CHESTNUT - THERE ARE 12 LEVELS IN ALL.

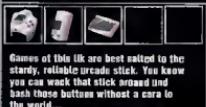
SOUL FIGHTER: THE CURSE OF GOMAR

Let the search for souls begin in
TOKA's first Dreamcast venture...



IN SOUL FIGHTER, THE WAY CAN SAVE YOUR PROGRESS THROUGH THE ADVENTURE LEVELS AND NOT MUCH ELSE.

Peripherals



Games of this ilk are best suited to the sturdy, reliable arcade stick. You know you can wack that stick around and bash those buttons without a care to the world...

ALTERNATIVELY...

Dynamite Cop

THERE'S NOT SUCH A VAST CHALLENGE ON OFFER IN DYNAMITE COP, BUT AT LEAST YOU CAN BATTLE IT OUT WITH UP TO FIVE ENEMIES AT ONCE. IF YOU'RE REALLY INTO SCROLLING GEAR-'EM-UPS THEN YOU MIGHT WANT TO RENT THIS ONE FROM GLOCKBUSTERS FOR THE NIGHT.

SOUL FIGHTER



SOUL FIGHTER

The biggest downfall Soul Fighter has is the lack of a two-player option. What's that all about then? It's a scrolling beat-'em-up, just like Final Fight, Streets of Rage, Golden Axe and the like (with the obvious exception of it being 3D). There's no obvious reason for it to be this way - even the cut-scenes sees all three warriors travelling together. Surely it would have worked better for the plot of the game? We'll leave a big question mark above that one; it's such a shame though as the game's so perfectly suited to multiplayer.



two player?

SOUL FIGHTER DESERVES ITS ADMIRABLE 8 OUT OF 10

called Orion, and a girlie named Sayomi. The storyline is a little sketchy, but basically the residents of your village have been turned into mad, vicious animal monsters by an evil force and you've been chosen by the town's ruler to hunt down all of the beasts and save their souls.

In Arcade Mode you're given five continues to try and complete the mode with. Sound easy? I don't think so. For starters, you have to get used to your character's moves and his or her weapon. This can take a little while as on occasion, your character doesn't respond too well to your instructions; one minute you're pulling off combos, then the next, you're facing the other way with your back to the enemy and you just can't turn round and they make the most of your vulnerability.

Save our Souls

The levels don't take too long at the start of the game. At the bottom of your screen, you're shown how many souls have got to be saved during the level and the

number can range from about 30 to 80 (in the later levels). Also, at the bottom of the screen is a map which covers about 5 per cent of the level's environment. On it, you can see where your enemies are positioned as well as the numerous treasure chests that are scattered around willy-nilly. When you come across a chest, just kick it and it will explode to expose an item which might be anything from a tasty plate of fruit to replenish your health, to a piece of manuscript that gives you a handy gaming hint.

Also, once you've saved the soul of an enemy, he will disintegrate and leave a little present behind for you - a fish maybe or even an axe. Basically, in Arcade Mode, if you don't pick up these treasures you're not going to get very far; five continues don't really go a long way.

Each of the characters have their own unique set of moves,

or rather variations of punch, kick, block, etc. and when the middle bar on the screen starts to flash yellow and red, you're capable of pulling off some super combos. These are pretty hard to achieve, but when you do, it looks damn spectacular. As for the weapons, they're probably one of the coolest features of the game. Altus has a sword which has quite a far reach - one movement can see off two or three enemies at a time if they're standing within reach. Sayomi has two daggers which she's pretty nifty with. She seems to be the

Piggyback and TOKA have teamed up for this, the second attempt for a 3D scrolling beat-'em-up on the Dreamcast. If you compare it with the likes of Dynamite Cop (Sega's offering) there's no competition. At least Soul Fighter is challenging for the player - almost too hard, you might say. One thing Dynamite Cop does boast over this is a two-player mode, and Soul Fighter would've benefited greatly by making it multiplayer.

Instead, the player chooses from three characters: a brave warrior called Altus, a magician



Publisher	Piggyback	Developer	Toka	Origin	UK	Genre	Beat-'em-up
Available	Out Now	Players	One	Price	£39.99	Contact	n/a



Altus

Altus is the son of King Valmek who trained him from an early age in the arts of warfare. Altus was already a master of the sword when his father was slain, but could only watch helplessly as the powers of Evil held him in thrall while the deed was committed. He swore to avenge his death, abandoning his studies to perfect his sword-fighting skills. Even though he's not the fastest of the three warriors, learning to control his brute strength and combat techniques with the sword will stand you in good stead against the evil minions as you battle desperately to save their poor souls.



Altus

quickest mover of the three characters and with this attribute, coupled with her daggers, she's a force to be reckoned with. But the best

weapon of the lot is Orion's, a magic staff which shoots out magical firebolts to cut through the enemy when they attack in swarms. To add to the challenge, though, your weapon only lasts a certain amount of time which is gauged on another bar at the top of your screen. Once it's run out, you have to wait until it's recharged before you can use it again; in the meantime, you must rely on your fists.

Taking Charge

One thing you'll no doubt notice is that as you get closer to the 12th level, the enemies become considerably braver.

They no longer descend on you one at a time, and instead, three or four of them may attack at once. Then again, by this time, your skills should be sharp enough to cope. And what about bosses? There isn't one at the end of every level; in fact, the only one worth a mention is the Dragon on level 12. All you have to do is avoid his fiery bad breath and big feet and slay him. It takes a while (and a few continuities), but it's worth it to see him flop painfully to the ground.

Adventure Mode works in much the same way as Arcade - the same environments are used, but you just



Sayomi

She's a trusted servant of King Valmek, so was chosen to spy on Queen Aetea and her son after their banishment from the Kingdom of Gomaz. Sayomi is renowned for her swiftness of foot and cunning hand-to-hand combat. She acts as the perfect counterpart to the brute force of Altus - swift where he is slow and skilful in the use of her double-daggers.



Sayomi

They no longer descend on you one at a time, and instead, three or four of them may attack at once. Then again, by this time, your skills should be sharp enough to cope. And what about bosses? There isn't one at the end of every level; in fact, the only one worth a mention is the Dragon on level 12. All you have to do is avoid his fiery bad breath and big feet and slay him. It takes a while (and a few continuities), but it's worth it to see him flop painfully to the ground.

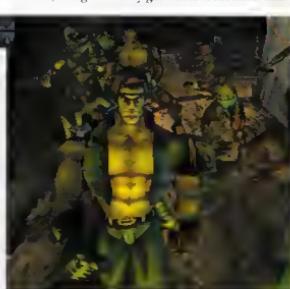
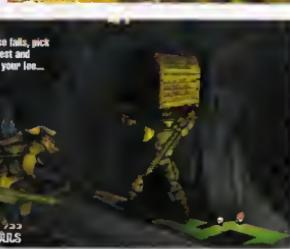
Adventure Mode works in much the same way as Arcade - the same environments are used, but you just



Orion

The powers of Evil have regrouped and enlarged their army, and while the characteristics of Altus and Sayomi may be better suited to out-and-out combat, Orion alone possess the power to finally lift the curse from the Kingdom and restore it to its previous peaceful state. Even though he isn't as swift as Sayomi or as tough as Altus, his magic staff can be extremely lethal against the lot. However, he must be careful not to run out of weapon energy in the middle of a fight, or he may not live to tell the tale.

what's the deal?



THE BIGGEST DOWFALL SOUL FIGHTER HAS IS THE LACK OF A TWO-PLAYER OPTION

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VERDICT

You'll get hours of entertainment out of Soul Fighter. The only downside to this otherwise excellent game is that it has no multiplayer option and it's costing out for one. It's a beat-'em-up with a twist and that's what's so cool about it!

8

Don't play games with criminals.

It will end in tears.

A SMALL sample of recent convictions:

Anthony Shaw	Cardiff	6 months prison
John Edgar	Wakefield	£400 fine & £120 costs
Brian Kane	Liverpool	4 x 50 hrs Community Service
Colin Jackson	Sunderland	£200 fine & £200 costs
Norman Mockford	Surrey	8 Months Prison & 180 hrs Community Service
Anthony Scaccia	Cardiff	£2000 fine & £1585 costs
Mark Hopkins	Newport	£100 fine & £100 costs
Rowan Pastille	Buckingham	5 x £400 fine & 6 x 150 hrs Community Service
PCs Direct	Northampton	3 x £2500 fine
Mark Williams	Aberaeron	£400 fine & £5000 costs

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You can't use anything else but the pad for this game, and what the hell, it works doesn't it? However, if you think a steering wheel would work, go right ahead, mate.

INITIALLY...

IT'S A NICE, LEISURELY SUNDAY AFTERNOON IN DREAMCAST LAND, WITH THE OLD FAVOURITE GAME OF BALLS MAKING AN EARLY DEBUT ON SEGA'S NEW CONSOLE. AS ONE OF THE MOST ACCOMPLISHED PC GAMES OF THE YEAR, THE SHORT DRIVE TO THE DC SEEMS TO HAVE LEFT EVERYTHING INTACT, OR HAS IT?

JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL

He's never won the World Championship, but Jimmy White has been involved in some fine computer games. But will his Cueball score on the Dreamcast?



SAVE YOUR HIGHEST SCORES, OPTIONS AND GAMES TO THE
LITTLE BOX STICK IN THE TOP OF YOUR JOYPAD. THE GAMES
NEEDS 8 MB OF SHD, SO BEST START WITH AN EMPTY ONE...



Slow Down

I don't know about you, but I'm the kind of gamer who likes nothing more than to bypass the rules, slap in the game and get straight to action. Anyroad, what do I need rules for? I've seen how they do snooker on the telly - you answer three general knowledge questions, Jim Davidson makes a crap joke, and then you win a hamper (or something). So temporally ignoring the numerous options, I set up a game of snooker against the worst player I could find.

Yikes. 'Ars' and 'whipped' are two harmless

CUEBALL IS WRAPPED UP IN SUCH A USER-FRIENDLY WAY THAT EVEN ABSOLUTE BEGINNERS CAN FIND THEIR WAY ROUND IN A SHORT AMOUNT OF TIME

words independent of one another, but bring them together and you've pretty much worked out my first hour of Cueball - arcade snooker this isn't. But don't let that put you off, you really are getting a nice package for your money, and if you put in time and effort, you'll find it a rewarding experience.

What's Your Game?

First things first. We ought to point out you're not just getting a snooker game here - they've also chucked in pool for free. Those who remember the original Jimmy White's title and/or the Virtual Pool/Snooker series will



COMING SOON...

JIMMY WHITE REALLY IS IN A LEAGUE OF HIS OWN WITH THIS ONE AS WE'VE HEARD NO RUMOURS OF ANY OTHER POOL/SNOOKER SIMS ON THE WAY TO THE DREAMCAST. THERE'S NO WAY TO GO A LONG WAY TO BEAT THIS ONE ANYHOW!



appreciate that more than those who don't.

Choosing which to play brings in the first of many nice touches you'll come to appreciate. Sure, it's a simple case of choosing pool or snooker, but instead of a straight 'take your pick' approach, you end up walking down a corridor (lined with highest scores) and into either the snooker room or pool room.

What the Jimmy White's series has done is to play it straight, leaving the fun ancillary stuff to the side whilst concentrating on accurately representing the game.

What you get is a table, halls and a selection of icons on the left of the screen. The immediate problem in porting this game across from the PC is the lack of mouse control. A joypad is never going to give you the same flexibility when zooming around the screen, quickly making choices and getting down to the business of lining up and playing your shot. In fairness though, it gives it a good shot.

What Cuchall does is to utilise every part of the Dreamcast controller to make the game as powerful as possible. For instance, you manoeuvre your camera angle by using the trigger buttons underneath the controller, then the stick at the top lines up the shot. The thumbpad is exclusively for dotted between the various icons, with the remaining A, B, X and Y buttons controlling elements such as power and spin.

Ball Control

By learning the various controls you can have influence over the actions on-screen. It's down to you whether you choose to have a view-line on to aim your shot for instance, or whether you go for a close-up or overhead view. It's up to you whether you want to ignore the power and spin altogether, or maybe you're the kind of person who spends hours lining up every shot. It's a credit to the game that you can not only make all these decisions, but also see them accurately represented on screen.

Now I'm no mathematician, but when I eventually get round to hitting that red button to play my latest masterstroke, I'm utterly convinced the whole thing feels right. What

JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL

Publisher	Virgin Interactive	Developer	Awesome	Origin	UK	Genre	Sports Sim
Available	November 99	Players	1-2	Price	£39.99	Contact	0171 551 0000

YOU'VE PROBABLY GUessed BY THE NATURE OF THE GAME THAT BIG CARS AND HUGE EXPLOSIONS AREN'T THE ORDER OF THE DAY

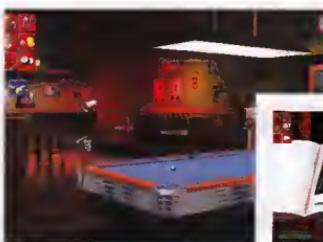
I'm talking about here is the way the beautifully drawn balls ricochet around the table, bouncing as naturally as you'd expect. With the level of accuracy available being so realistic, you're guaranteed a fair game, something other titles often overlook. If you play a bad stroke, it's your fault, and it's not down to some dumb algorithm that a bleary-eyed programmer was working on late at night.

Optional Extras

You've probably guessed by the nature of the game that big cars, huge explosions and major effects aren't the order of the day. What is, though, is a hi-res representation of the snooker table with balls that positively glisten. If a shot's heading for the pocket, the flexible camera automatically cuts to the pocket to close-in on the action. Or maybe you want the camera to follow the cue ball immediately after you've played the shot? You've guessed it, it can happen.

I'd have been happy with just the central game and a few opponents to knock some balls around with (insert your own seedy joke here). But when you set up a new game, you get extra choices. In Pool Mode, you can choose which rules to use, your opponent and how many frames you're playing across.

In short, it's an excellent game, and if snooker or pool are your thing and you're after the ultimate simulation, then this is it. So nice one, Jimmy. Any chance of you paying me back my lost pocket money now? ■■■



on the side some little extras and a tip down memory lane too...



JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL

One-armed Bandit
Found in the pool room, this is a simian trait machine simulator. It's a bloody occurrance. It ate all my money and I didn't win a thing.



Draughts
In the snooker room, everything's that little bit more refined, meaning the extra-curricular goodies kick off with a game of draughts. And the Dreamcast plays a mean game. You can, as you'd expect, change the camera angle midway through.



Darts
This is the best of the four extra games included in Cueball. You take aim, then hit the controller button whilst you swing the dart. There's even shot suggestions to help you with the maths. It's a simple diversion really, but ideal for returning home from the pub with your mates.

VERDICT

It's hardly cutting-edge console entertainment, but it's still a painstakingly accurate and mighty enjoyable experience.

8

dreamcast
16-BIT TECHNOLOGY • ONLINE GAMING
100% UNOFFICIAL 100% UNRAINED 100% DREAMCAST

Publisher Sega
Available Out Now

Developer Sega
Players 1-2

Origin UK
Price £39.99

Genre Beat-'em-up
Contact 0181 9953399

ALTERNATIVELY

If you're into this genre check out *Golf Fighter* (Page 68). It's along the same lines as *Dynamite Cop* though it's more free roaming and offers a longer challenge (though the two player mode is missing).



Peripherals

To get the full effect of *Dynamite Cop*'s unique gravity-defying Arcadia Stick, it is a good idea, but not a necessity. Sega's JoyPad is good enough, but I don't recommend using the envelope stick.

INITIALLY...

DYNAMITE COP OFFERS SOME EXCELLENT GRAPHIC DESIGN FEATURES ON THE OPTION SCREENS AND SUB MENUS. THE PROBLEM, IS THAT WHEN YOU'RE SPENDING FORTY QUID ON THOUGH, SO WHAT YOU MIGHT FIND INTERESTING IS EXTRA MODES NOT AVAILABLE AT THE START.

DYNAMITE COP

Long John Silver ain't got nothing on these boys...

Screaming beat-'em-ups are a bit like busses really. You don't see one for ages then two come along at the same time. Tsk. So the question should be asked; which bus do you get on? Should it be *Dynamite Cop* featuring extensive two player modes, or should it be *Soul Fighter* (Page 56) featuring a wide, expansive playing field and more levels? There are pros and cons for both games, but let's concentrate on *Dynamite Cop* for now.

Aim of the Game

The story behind *Dynamite Cop* is pretty straight forward really. All you've got to do is rescue the Presidents Daughter from a boat that's been hijacked by a mob of modern day pirates. Once you've selected your character (from a choice of three hard-as-nails commando types) you must choose your approach to the boat. You can parachute in, scuba in or simply pull up along side and jump aboard. Good start really, it all sounds quite interesting right? Well unfortunately



that's just about where it ends. Even though the game changes ever so slightly (most of it's just aesthetic) for each of the three characters it's too short and easy to complete. Give yourself an hour and a half and you'll have the whole game cracked for all three characters, no that's pretty short!

There are some nice touches that do aid longevity like Survival Mode, Versus Mode and the Suh game Tranquilliser Gun but there's still just not enough on offer to warrant the price tag. Perhaps, after a night on the beer/coke/girlfriend it would be worth renting from your local Blockbusters, but that's about the size of it I'm afraid. What's going on here then Sega?



WHAT'S GOING ON HERE THEN SEGA?



DYNAMITE COP



tranquilliser gun

It's unlikely many of you will remember this little 'gem' as Sega released it back in 1980 when all games really did look this crap. The basic idea here is to run around the 'hedges' and tranquillise as many animals as you can then drag them back to your truck before they come around again. Sounds nasty, and indeed it is! Some animals can stand the test of time, but this just isn't one of them.



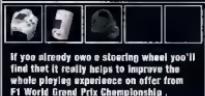
VERDICT

It looks good, plays okay and is reasonably good fun. However, there's just not enough to offer to keep a single player coming back for more. Furthermore the game was at least twice the size...

6

dreamcast
MONTHLY

100% UNOFFICIAL 100% UNBIASED 100% DREAMCAST



If you already own a steering wheel you'll find that it really helps to improve the whole playing experience on offer from F1 World Grand Prix Championship.

ALTERNATIVELY



Even though UBI Soft's offering isn't blessed with the official F1 licence it offers solid gameplay and decent graphics. It scored a respectable seven in issue two which makes it a better purchase than this one

Publisher	Sega	Developer	Video Systems	Origin	UK	Genre	Driving
Available	Out Now	Players	1-2	Price	£39.99	Contact	0181 9953399

INITIALLY...

F1. EITHER YOU LOVE IT OR LOATH IT. PERSONALLY, I LOVE IT AND I'M REALLY EXCITED AT PLAYING AN OFFICIAL GAME THAT HOLDS ALL THE '98 SEASON'S EVENTS. THE INTRODUCTION SEQUENCE GETS THE GAME OFF ON THE RIGHT FOOT WITH SOME NICE VISUALS AND A BANGING TUNE TO GET YOU NIGHT IN THE MOOD.

F1 WORLD GRAND PRIX

And it's go, go, go!

There's no doubt that F1 World GP has all the required elements to make it the best driving sim on the Dreamcast. The licence helps, of course, but then money spent on the game itself is money not spent on the game itself...

One of the game's biggest selling points is the '98 season events. This option (while playing the Championship Mode) accurately recreates everything that happened back in '98 right down to lap times, weather conditions and all the associated thrills and spills. For a keen follower of the sport, this is an attractive incentive as are all the accurate car set-ups and telemetry readings. It all sounds pretty exciting really doesn't it? Joining the Ferrari team for an entire season and racing as Eddie Irvine round all of the world's best known circuits... There's no doubt that that's all well and good, but the game is sadly let down by its execution.

128-bit?

Graphically, there are some pretty worrying aspects to this one that shouldn't really be happening with the Dreamcast's superior hardware. Slowdown, for example, is a word I thought I wouldn't have to use any



more since I stopped writing for a PlayStation mag, but here I am complaining that an F1 game - of all games - suffers significantly from the problem. Amid traffic, there's no escaping it and while trying to negotiate corners it really throws you right off track - literally! This wouldn't be that bad if the graphics were mind-blowingly good, but that's just not the case. They're good, alright, but games like Monaco have just as good graphics without the slowdown, so why should we have it here?



As far as gameplay and control are concerned things aren't all that bad, but there's nothing really to write home about either. There are driver-assist functions on offer for braking, gear change and even acceleration - these help novice drivers get to grips with the game. But the steering is a little too twitchy for my liking. That's not to say it's bad, but you have to be so careful and delicate with the analogue stick that attention is often distracted from your speed and current gear.

Of course, practice makes perfect, so if you're willing to forgive F1's shortcomings, and you're an avid F1 addict, you'll more than likely enjoy what's on offer. If you're not you'll have probably turned the page by now anyway.



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VERDICT

The official licence is a bonus, but it just doesn't attempt to use the Dreamcast's hardware to its full capabilities. There's nothing here (apart from slightly higher resolution graphics) that can't be done the PSX - not good!

6



The analog pad works wonderfully with this game, the controls are spot on and the bike reacts perfectly to your instructions. What more could you want?

SUZUKI ALSTARE EXTREME RACING



Two late trains and a stalled subway. Aggravating, yes. Surprising, no. Criterion's electric atmosphere melted away my bitterness - the company knew what it had created; reviews were a mere formality.



The first thing you notice is the speed. If games could be tested like cars, statistics would put other racers to shame. As the game progresses you gain access to six GSXRs: standard 600, tuned 600, superbike 600, and then standard 750, tuned 750 and superbike 750. GSXRs have earned infamous cult status as the most popular nutter bike for a very good reason. In the words of Ride Magazine, they pack 'Vinnie Jones attitude into a chassis lighter than a helium-filled ballerina'. Criterion has emulated this, notched up the horsepower and strapped on a turbo. The result is awesome.

INITIALLY...

PURE, SMOOTH SPEED ALMOST SCARES YOU LIKE A FIRST TRIP ON A SUPERBIKE. GRAPHICAL PWDNESS IS UNQUESTIONABLE AND THE BIKES ARE INSTANTLY ACCESSIBLE. EXPECTATIONS AND ADRENALINE RISE WITH EVERY CORNER.

Your speedo is largely pointless. The corners lunge past so violently, it's inadvisable to take your eyes off the road. By the time you've checked your speed, you probably have none. And you know you're going fast, you don't need an instrument to tell you.

But it's not just the speed that shocks you - there have always been fast games. It's the sheer

**FANS WILL REVEL
IN THE CHANCE TO
JOIN THE TEAM**

quality and sparkle of the graphics. Even in reality, riding fast down the motorway quickly loses its appeal. Windy country roads, desolate cities and rock-strewn beaches allow the absolute optimum in enjoyment from the bikes. No corners have been cut when it comes to imagination. Each track is so detached from the last, it must have been like working on several different projects.

COMING SOON...

AS FAR AS WE KNOW THERE
ARE NO OTHER BIKE GAMES
ON THE WAY. BUT WHO
CARES? IF THIS ONE
SHOULD COME OUT, GO
AND BUY A SUPERBIKE.



SUZUKI ALSTARE EXTREME RACING



Publisher	Ubi Soft	Developer	Criterion	Origin	UK	Genre	Racing
Available	October 1999	Players	1-2	Price	£39.99	Contact	0181 9449000



A Touch of Realism

In fact, speaking of different projects, few games hold so much contrast with such success. Between the bikes and the environments lies a massive and dangerous void - clearly the latter are entirely fictional and fanciful. The bikes, on the other hand, are almost carbon copies of the 'real life' machines. After all, this is a licensed game and, thankfully, all the better for it. Superbike fans will revel in the chance to join the Alstare team, but first you have to qualify for the reserve team. Then, if you're good enough, you'll be picked to join the legends, a really satisfying achievement.

I ride a Fireblade and I was very impressed with how realistically the bikes handled. Without the support of Suzuki, this would not have been possible. I got used to the bikes very quickly and one of the development team suggested this could be due to my experience of bikes. At first, I found this a bit comical, but after lengthy play, some very subtle and accurate elements of handling did become apparent.

The jewel in the crown, though, is where they've pushed the bikes beyond reality. Hit the turbo while cornering and the front wheel comes up, the back skips out, and the bike veers slightly as the wheel hits the tarmac again. In

A FABULOUS EXAMPLE OF HOW REALISM AND FANTASY COMPLIMENT EACH OTHER WELL

reality, this would be a rare scenario, but if you were to ever try turboing round a corner and you didn't shoot off the track, that's probably how the bike would have reacted.

The fact is, sports bikes are scary. It's rare that you find a road empty, windy and dry enough to really push it and even then it's a matter of chance. Suzuki Alstare allows you to be right on the edge, all the time. And it does feel genuine. In the first person, it's particularly realistic and the thrill factor is boosted further. I often found myself switching to first person, overdoing it, wiping out, and switching back to third person to make up the time.

Criterion has really played on the Dreamcast's strengths. Obviously, there's the speed element, but also the graphics.

breaking the law

These are twin tracks in all and every one is a work of art. The following three are particularly inspiring.



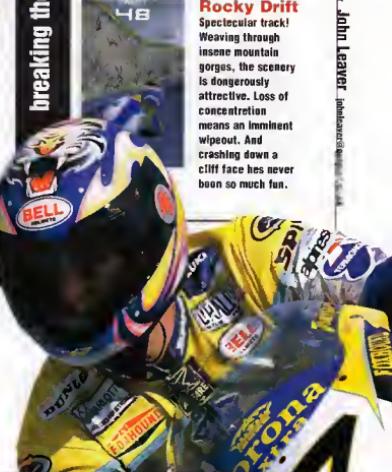
Castle Raceway

The simplest, most realistic circuit. It brings all the best aspects of the race track. Every conceivable corner has been thrown in and your racing line is particularly important. True superbike fans will treasure it.



Rocky Drift

Spectacular track! Weaving through insene mountain gorges, the scenery is dangerously attractive. Loss of concentration means an imminent wipeout. And crashing down a cliff face has never been so much fun.



VERDICT

Suzuki Alstare has proved that on the DC, there is no need to compromise. It's fast, smooth and glowing with glorious textures. Cars suck, bikes rule.

8

dreamcast
MONTHLY

100% UNOFFICIAL 100% UNBIASED 100% DREAMCAST

Publisher Sega
Available Out Now

Developer Sega
Players One

Origin UK
Price £39.99

Genre Simulation
Contact 0181 9953399

COMING SOON...

THIS IS THE ONE AND ONLY FISHING SIMULATION GAME TO GET, MOSTLY BECAUSE THERE SIMPLY AREN'T ANYMORE PENDING RELEASE. HOWEVER, IF THERE ARE ANY IN THE FUTURE, YOU'LL FIND OUT FIRST IN BCM.

Peripherals

Your Dreamcast pad works just fine if you haven't got a controller, but it's a bit of a stretch that it'll even cast on the rod, though, as Sega Bass Fishing wouldn't be a fully-fledged simulation if you didn't use one.



INITIALLY...

IT'S NOTHING SHORT OF IMPRESSIVE, THE WATER EFFECTS IN PARTICULAR. MORE IMPORTANTLY, SEGA BASS FISHING IS JUST SO EASY TO HANDLE, CAST YOUR ROD AND REEL THOSE GASS IN. WHAT COULD BE SIMPLER?

SEGA BASS FISHING

Another spankin' Sega title to keep the punters hooked



EVERYTHING IN THIS TITLE RESEMBLES THE REAL THING

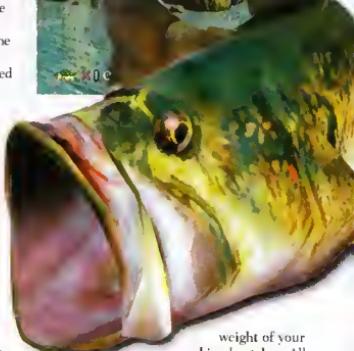


Boys I was looking forward to getting my hands on a review version of this game. This has to be one of my favourite Dreamcast titles so far, and it's only been out for a month! The first thing that grabs your attention in this game is the lake you're fishing on. Everything in this title resembles the real thing in every aspect. If you look at the water you can see the sun reflecting off it, the gentle ripples on the surface and the rain droplets disappearing.

So you're feeling relaxed already and you haven't even started fishing yet.

First you have to choose which game mode you want to 'tackle' first (sorry). Arcade's pretty simple; there are three areas to visit: Lodge, Cape and Inlet and all you have to do is catch as many Bass as you can to too total over 5000 grams in weight. This mode only took me about three quarters of an hour to complete, all I could do was hope there were more, longer challenges to face.

I then turned my attention to Original Mode; now this is more like it. This involves you taking part in the SBFA Amateur Tournament. The competition takes place over five stages, each one set during three different times of the day: Morning, noon and evening. You've got three lots of around four minutes to catch as many 'Super Big' Bass as you can. The heavier the fish you catch the better as you're awarded points at the end of stage which depend on the total



weight of your combined catches. The points from each stage are added together to determine your tournament ranking. Expect some disappointment though if you don't rank in at least tenth place, as you'll get disqualified otherwise. If I was to take a guess, I'd say you would have to try and get up to at least 15,000 grams each stage to have a chance of entering the Challenge Tournament Series; good luck.

It's a great game, there's no doubt about that. Look after yourselves, though, as if you go overboard using your rod for hours at a time you could end up with RSI. ■■■

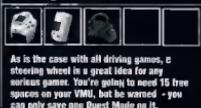
VERDICT

An amazing true-to-life fishing simulation experience, in every sense. It's different every time you play it and you'll be hooked from the first time. I'm off to do a spot of the real thing now... I'm converted!

8

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Peripherals



As the case with all driving games, a steering wheel is a great idea for any serious gamer. You're going to need 15 free spaces on your VMSI, but he warned - you can only save one Quest Mode on it.

GET BASS • TOKYO HIGHWAY CHALLENGE

**INITIALLY...**

QUOTE AMAZINGLY, THERE'S NO INTRODUCTION SEQUENCE TO TOKYO, BUT THEN THIS JUST MIGHT BE THE FIRST OF MANY SIMILARITIES TO NAMCO'S NICE RACER SERIES ON THE PLAYSTATION. THERE'S PLENTY ON OFFER; LOTS OF CARS, DIFFERENT PLAYING MODES AND PLENTY OF ROAD BELOW YOU...

**COMING SOON...****Midnight GT**

MIDNIGHT GT IS RAGE'S LATEST TITLE AND IS CURRENTLY IN DEVELOPMENT. IT'S BEEN RECENTLY ANNOUNCED THAT MIDNIGHT WILL UTILISE A NEW TEXTURE COMPRESSION ROUTINE THAT WILL REDUCE THE TEXTURES BY THREE TIMES THE USUAL AMOUNT OF TEXTURES TO BE USED WITHOUT ANY EFFECT ON PERFORMANCE. CHECK OUT PAGE 31.



TOKYO HIGHWAY CHALLENGE

Ultra-realistic urban racing Dreamcast style

**TOKYO HIGHWAY CHALLENGE**

+
This aspect of the game is the most in-depth of any driving game available.

Tuning

Every imaginable part of your car is upgradeable; engine, suspension, drive train, chassis, muffler and wheels have at least five possible upgrades while changing the aerodynamics on your car can take all night. There are bumpers, grills, lights, bonnets, mirrors, side skirts and splitters, each alone having at least five different choices. Once these parts have been purchased, they can be swapped and changed to your heart's content. Join this with all the possible different settings like Steering Spind, Brake Response, Clearance, Shocks, Transmission Retard... Oh I give up, there's just not enough room for all this malarkey...

One hundred and thirty-seven cars. That's a total of 21 teams of underground, hard-core drivers all willing to slap a wedge of cash on the bonnet for a racing wager. Don't get too excited about the prospect of winging around realistic Tokyo highways in all of these cars, however; there are actually 24 cars at your disposal. Pretty impressive, yes, but the best is still to come...

Let's set the scene. Tokyo's highways by night are over-run by lawless drivers hell-bent on winning the 1999 Tokyo Highway Challenge and being crowned the Ultimate Import Racer. That's quite an accolade, so rest assured that the competition is tough, and for a novice driver (that's you), it's going to be a daunting experience to say the least. Your quest begins in a car shop with 25,000 credits tucked in your back pocket. Out of the 24 cars available only five are within your price range at the moment. After spending your cash, you can get straight into a race. You're given the choice of five tracks, although it is, in fact, one large track that can also be played in reverse. The course is well designed, mixing hair-raising fast straights with tricky, tight turns. The fact that you're destined to play the whole game in perpetual night doesn't really matter as there's plenty of juicy light sourcing and fantastic 'light trails' to emphasise speed and movement. Graphically, THC is quite unbelievable, barely equalled in resolution.

Challenges take place by driving freely around the course until you catch up with a

possible opponent (signalled on the map as blue dots - beaten opponents turn green and unbeaten turn purple). By flashing your lights at them you're automatically taken into race mode and battle commences. Winning and losing is based on a time-lag method using two time bars at the top of the screen to illustrate the state of play. Once the winner is decided, the cash changes hands and you're free to continue or go back to the menu screen and use your money however you see fit.

Gameplay is quick and arcadey, giving an excellent adrenaline rush, but this subsides with time leaving you with a bitter taste owing to the annoying control system that seems to insist on huge sideways drifting round every corner. Opponents' cars don't seem to have this problem, as they can whip around any corner as if on rails, escalating the annoyance yet further.

The longevity of THC comes into question if you're really not interested in challenging and beating 137 cars on the same piece of track. So unless you really want to purchase and fully upgrade 24 cars, you're better off turning your attention to the likes of Speed Devils.



N split screen two-player
game speed is compromised but the graphics are still there



dreamcast
16-BIT TECHNOLOGY • ONLINE GAMING
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VERDICT

Gorgeous graphics and millions of car upgrades just can't stop Tokyo Highway becoming repetitive with time. A combination of fun and some subtle twists in gameplay could have made all the difference.

6





The pad can take a toll on the old fingers and wrists after a couple of hours of non-stop playing so if you're particularly prone to injury get yourself an arcade stick - it's more realistic anyway.

Publisher	Virgin	Developer	Capcom	Origin	UK	Genre	Beat-'em-up
Available	Out Now	Players	1-4	Price	£39.99	Contact	0171 551 0000

INITIALLY...

IT'S COOL TO SEE ALL OF YOUR FAVOURITE CARTOON CHARACTERS KICKING SOME ASS, BUT I DON'T LIKE HOW THE X-MEN HAVE TURNED ON EACH OTHER. I ALMOST FELT GUILTY WHEN I BEAT WOLVERINE USING DANDIT. ONLY FOR A SECOND MIND.

MARVEL Vs CAPCOM

Can two dimensional fighting games stay alive and kicking into the next generation?

ALTERNATIVELY...

Street Fighter Alpha 3

ALPHA-5
ALL THE CLASSIC 2D BEAT-'EM-UPS
ARE REARING THEIR PRETTY HEADS
AT THE MOMENT IT SEEMS. FOR A
TASTER OF HOW IT FARES ON THE
DREAMCAST, SWIN TO PAGE 10.



press the two trigger buttons at the same time to swap from one to the other. And as for their moves, special or non, they're uniquely eye-popping. For instance Spiderman can cast his web and wrap you up your opponent in a cocoon before punching their cartoon-like lights out.

It's not the easiest of games to get on with, but there is a Training mode and if that's not enough you can always lower the level of difficulty in the Options.

|| GAMEPLAY IS LIGHTNING FAST



dreamcast

www.ijerph.com

VERDICT

This game is hell-a-cool (sorry we've got a whole South Park thing going on at the moment), it's got great characters, great moves and an all-new four-player tag-team option. It may be keeping up with the big boys but still in a league of its own.

7

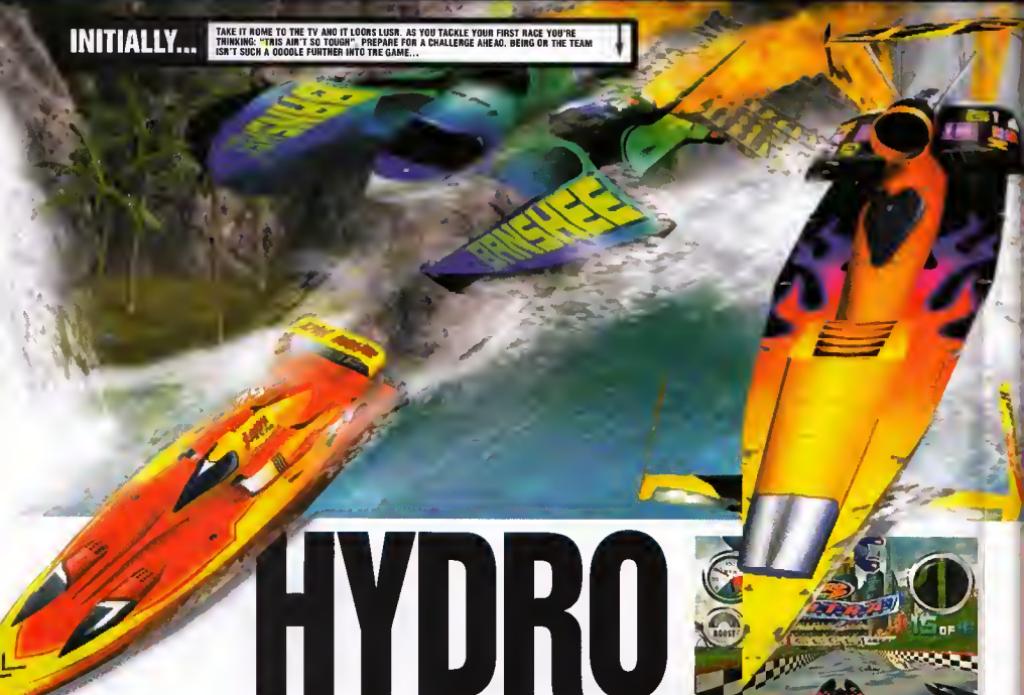
Peripherals



The pad suits the job just fine, but the steering wheel would add a touch of realism. This game relies on precision steering, so if you think you've got what it takes to steer round sharp corners on choppy waves, go right ahead...

INITIALLY...

TAKE IT HOME TO THE TV AND IT LOOKS LUSH. AS YOU TACKLE YOUR FIRST RACE YOU'RE THINKING: "THIS AIN'T SO TOUGH". PREPARE FOR A CHALLENGE AHEAD. BEING ON THE TEAM ISN'T SUCH A DOODLE FURTHER INTO THE GAME...



HYDRO THUNDER

Calm waters, storybook settings, sleek superboats and an adrenaline rush that would only compare with the real thing. Would you like a slice? Then you should join the Hydro Thunder Racing Team...



What a cool idea! Take nine souped-up superboats, 13 unique tracks and up to two charged-up gamers and whip up the perfect mix for a good old-fashioned night in with a Dreamcast. And so Hydro Thunder was born, full of promise and originality - do you get the feeling I'm building you up for a fall?

When I first saw the screenshots for Hydro Thunder, I couldn't sit comfortably in my seat for all the excitement. Racing racing is one of my favourite pastimes (not for real, mind) and the thought of being able to race speedboats was the most attractive offer I've had in a long

IN HYDRO THUNDER, YOUR VAND WILL SAVE YOUR PROGRESS THROUGHOUT YOUR GAME, AS WELL AS SAVE YOUR HIGH SCORES.



WHAT THE PUBLISHER SAYS...

WE ASKED KEN FEDERMAN, EXECUTIVE AND GENERAL MANAGER OF MIDWAY, WHY OUR READERS SHOULD BUY HYDRO THUNDER: "THE GRAPHICS ARE STUNNING, OUR PLAYERS SHOULD BE IMMersed IN THE WORLD OF SPEEDBOAT RACING. THE GAME UTILIZES CUTTING-EDGE TECHNOLOGY TO DELIVER AN INTENSELY COMPETITIVE RACING EXPERIENCE". SO NOW YOU KNOW.

HYDRO THUNDER

Publisher	Midway	Developer	Eurocom	Origin	USA	Genre	Racing
Available	Out Now	Players	1-2	Price	£39.99	Contact	01306 885 231



while I can tell you.

The boats themselves vary in shape and form - some are sleek and trim, whereas others are perfectly round and skim across the water's surface like a pond skater. Midway has kept it simple, though, and the various boats become available once you've finished the appropriate difficulty level, starting with Easy and finishing on Hard.

For those of you who enjoy a challenge, Hydro Thunder should be at the top of your list of Dreamcast titles to buy, and you should know by now that when we say a game's challenging, it's almost impossible to complete. The Easy tracks aren't exactly what you would call a breeze. The courses themselves are simple to negotiate and I'd go so far as to say they're a pleasure - it's your opposition which causes the hassle.

problem, or so you would think. In later levels, you can no longer depend on the sheer speed of your craft to carry you through the finish line. At different positions along the course you'll notice blue and red boost pick-ups. The blue ones give you four seconds' worth of turbo and the red ones give you nine. The amount of turbo you have is shown on a meter on the right-hand side of your screen. As the needle reaches the empty mark, you hear a heeping noise to let you know you're running out and when it finally reaches empty, your boat powers down and begins to crawl.

It's up to you whether you conserve your turbo power for certain parts of the

because if you don't reach the jump, you'll end up wiping out. Some ramps also serve as short cuts, which, if you broach them correctly, can shift you forward a few positions. It's worth taking a few risks with this game, as you ain't got a hope in hell of winning otherwise.

There are also at least two shortcuts on each of the tracks which prove useful in your quest to get ahead. Although finding them will mean you sacrifice a chance of finishing in time.

There are countless features to Hydro Thunder that make it a stunning game: it's fast, the graphics are as smooth as a baby's behind and the water effects are top-notch. I'm going to leave it up to you to decide how addictive you could say it is. But for me, well, let's just say I now reckon there's a fine line to draw between a game such as this being either addictive or just so god damn frustratingly hard that you'll hate yourself if you give in. ■ ■

HYDRO THUNDER



Space Crafts

Some of the speedboats in Hydro Thunder are blatantly borne out of the developers' vivid imaginations. Out of all of them, Rad Hazard is by far the coolest. You have to admit, though, that it does look remarkably like the alien ships from Independence Day. It just so happens to be one of the best boats on offer in the game, and in the words of Will Smith himself: "I gotta get me one of these"...



VERDICT

It looks gorgeous, plays like a dream, but it's just too amazingly difficult. I can't help thinking they've made it this difficult because they've only included one mode of play. Midway has had to extend the longevity of Hydro Thunder by some means; it's just a shame they went about it the wrong way.

7

IT'S WORTH TAKING A FEW RISKS WITH THIS GAME, AS YOU AIN'T GOT A HOPE IN HELL OF WINNING OTHERWISE

Luckily the controls are simple and your boat reacts perfectly to your guidance, so the first two tracks for me were merely a training lesson on the workings of the game. The courses are littered with various obstacles, namely posts that protrude from the water and jet skiers who predictably think they own the water. But that's only two of them; when you reach the harder tracks you'll see what I mean by littered.

Turbo Charged

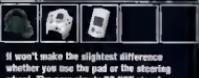
Like any other racing game, victory is dependent on you learning the track; once you've done that, winning becomes no

courses, but in some cases you have to. On every course there's at least one ramp to navigate and at the top of them there's usually a turbo power-up to collect. Some ramps you can approach at full speed and reach your goal with ease, but for others, you must have some turbo saved up

dreamcast
MONTHLY

128-BIT TECHNOLOGY • ONLINE GAMING

100% UNOFFICIAL 100% UNBIASED 100% DREAMCAST



If you won't make the slightest difference whether you use the pad or the steering wheel. The cars simply DO NOT steer.

COMING SOON...



Stunt GP

STUNT GP IS A UNIQUE RACER BASED ON MINI CARS. THE TRACK DESIGN IS COLORFUL IN EVERY SENSE OF THE WORD, WITH ROOFS, RAMPS AND JUMPS MAKING DRIVING EXTREMELY INTENSE. THIS IS BY NO MEANS YOUR AVERAGE RACER.

IN BUGGY HEAT, THE VAMPS SAVES YOUR PHRENOUS AS WELL AS MONIFICATIONS MADE TO YOUR CAR. ALSO, DEPENDING ON WHICH ONE YOU CHOOSE, THE VAMPS CAN MAKE AN IMAGE OF YOUR CAR THROUGHOUT THE GAME.

SCREEN SHOT IS AN IMAGE OF THE GAME.

IN BUGGY HEAT, THE VAMPS SAVES YOUR PHRENOUS AS WELL AS MONIFICATIONS MADE TO YOUR CAR. ALSO, DEPENDING ON WHICH ONE YOU CHOOSE, THE VAMPS CAN MAKE AN IMAGE OF YOUR CAR THROUGHOUT THE GAME.

SCREEN SHOT IS AN IMAGE OF THE GAME.

Publisher	Sega	Developer	Cn	Origin	UK	Genre
Available	November 1999	Players	1-2	Price	£39.99	Racing

Contact 0181 9953399

INITIALLY...

ANTICIPATION'S OFF THE CHART AS YOU LOAD UP THE GAME, AND EVEN THOUGH YOU MAKE GOOD HEADWAY IN YOUR FIRST RACE, YOUR CAR HAS SOME SORT OF PROBLEM STEERING, AND ALL YOU CAN DO IS HOPE THE OTHER VEHICLES HAVE MORE CONTROL...

BUGGY HEAT

Strap yourselves in, it's going to be a rough ride...



DCM has followed Buggy Heat's progress carefully, probably because we saw a whole heap of potential in the title. We played a preview version, then the Japanese version and after scrutinising them both, we were left with our fingers crossed in the hope that Sega would iron out some pretty substantial creases.

I've got no complaints about the concept of this game, it's just what the Dreamcast needs so far as the racing genre goes. But if you do choose to buy it, you're bound to see what I mean about the control of your chosen vehicle. I'll come back to that later.

There are three game modes to play: Championship, Time Attack and two-player Versus Mode. Championship Mode is by far the most challenging. You start off on the Normal difficulty setting which consists of three courses. To open up the next difficulty level you must come third place overall, which doesn't pose much of a problem.

Next you select your buggy, though only half of them are in fact buggies, with the rest

resembling off-road Land Rovers. Along with your buggy goes its driver, some male, others female, but let's not have disputes over which sex is best at driving, as it's your ear that matters in this game.

The tracks over the three levels are set in France, Russia, the States, Peru, Egypt and Japan. The only thing Sega decided to alter from one difficulty setting to another is as far as the courses go is the weather conditions. More tracks would have been welcome, as in Time Attack and two-player the same ones are there again.



HOW CAN SEGA EXPECT SUCCESS IF THEY OVERLOOKS THE MOST IMPERATIVE CONTROL SYSTEM IN THE GAME?

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VERDICT

Buggy Heat could have been an anticipated, fast-paced race, but the 'car' controls let the entire game down. There's a distinct lack of variety in the courses; the only thing that makes this game interesting is the way you can decorate your buggy. The graphics are not bad, but it still won't change the fundamentals.

5

Of course, the flight stick would be preferable in this game, and no doubt it would make it easier to control your plane. But the pad works well enough - once you get used to the awkward handling that is.



Publisher Crave | Developer Cri | Origin UK | Genre Flight sim
Available October | Players 1-2 | Price £39.99 | Contact 0181 9658088

TIME 00:46:43 SCORE 500
4.000



INITIALLY...

IT'S VERY... HOW CAN I PUT IT? SIMPLE - GRAPHICALLY THAT IS. THE FIRST THING TO DO IS TRAINING, AND IT'S HARD TO SAY THE LEAST. YOU'RE UNIFED ON THE COCKPIT, WHICH, UNLESS YOU WRITE THEM DOWN, YOU FORGET WITHIN THE FIRST TWO MINUTES. THIS GAME'S FOR THE SERIOUS FLIGHT SIM GAMER.

AERO WINGS

It's one of the Dreamcast's first flight sims, but will it be prepared for take off when it hits home territory?



We had this game in the office when we first began Dreamcast Monthly, but it was the Japanese counterpart. The one thing this game relies on is the briefings each time you begin the Blue Impulse Missions. Well, we can't understand Japanese, so when we saw the UK version we grabbed it.

We can now understand what the tutor's going on about (as in it's in English) it's just too complicated. My advice is to get the old books out and read up on the art of flying first.

So this game's already started off on the wrong foot with me. But that by no means dismisses its possible popularity with those wannabe flying acrobatic pilots out there - this will suit them down to the ground.

Training Corps

You're not obliged to train before you begin. You can start straight away playing the Blue Impulse Mode or Sky Mission Attack, though I wouldn't advise it.

Blue Impulse Mission resembles your

training exercises at first. The idea behind it is to prepare you for the Blue Impulse flying team.

Initiation takes place over ten tasks, this includes mastering the 180-degree turn, taking off and landing. Then there's fancy moves: basic acrobatics, formation loops and formation rolls. These involve keeping the same distance and speed as the plane in front. At the appropriate time, you must manoeuvre, then roll in perfect sync: most of the time you end up crashing.

Listen out for your co-pilot, a gruff sounding bloke who barks orders while flying. Things like 'what the hell do you think you're doing?' and 'come back when you're ready' become infuriating.

The mission briefings are very techy, as if you're supposed to have a background in flying. You're

shown a diagram of what your flight should resemble in practice, but in reality, your preparation's shot to pieces. Once you've made your first cockpit cock-up, you're shown where you went wrong.

In Sky Mission Attack Mode you must find targets and fly through them within the time limit. The graphics are pretty poor. If you're at high altitude, they're impressive, but up close it's a different story; just big, grey blobs. When you pass through a target you're awarded points, the more you fly through, the more chance you have at coming first place on the ranking table. It sounds simple doesn't it? Either play a laboriously hard game of flying acrobatics or a dull, boring game of find the targets. Crave haven't pushed the boat out where gameplay's concerned. The only audience this game appeals to are either those who have too much money to waste, or people who never miss a Red Arrows display. ■■

COMING SOON...

Air Force Delta

KIRIMI HAS ALSO JUMPED ONTO THE HANDWAGON WITH THIS VERY IMPRESSIVE-LOOKING TITLE. UNLIKE AERO WINGS, AIR FORCE DELTA PUTS YOU IN THE THICK OF THE ACTION. IT HAS SEVEN MONSTROUS COMBAT GAME MODES, AND THE CHAPPIEST WELL, THEY MAKE AERO WINGS PALE IN SIGNIFICANCE.

CRAVE HASN'T EXACTLY PUSHED THE BOAT OUT WHERE GAMEPLAY'S CONCERNED

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16-BIT TECHNOLOGY • ONLINE GAMING

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VERDICT

If you fancy finding out what it's like to do some tricky flying acrobatics, this is the game for you. Otherwise, I can imagine you getting bored of getting nowhere after half an hour's worth of play. If you just want to have a go at the Blue Impulse, then look at *Top Gun: Flight-Mode*. That'll keep you occupied for another, say, five minutes.

6

ALTERNATIVELY

Flick to page 73 to find our review of Marvel vs Capcom. This game's bursting at the seams with cool game modes and moves, plus all your fave cartoon characters; you can't go wrong...

Peripherals



The pad doesn't work well with Street Fighter; pulling off special moves is hard, and trying makes your hand uncomfortable.

Publisher	Virgin Interactive	Developer	Capcom	Origin	UK	Genre	Beat-'em-up
Available	Winter '99	Players	1-2	Price	£39.99	Contact	0171 5510000

AS YOU CAN PROBABLY GUESS, YOUR VMU SAVES YOUR PROGRESS IN THE VARIOUS MODES AS WELL AS YOUR SEVEN BURGERS, WHICH YOU CAN VIEW VIA THE MODE MENU.



INITIALLY...

IT'S JUST ANOTHER CLASSIC 2D BEAT-'EM-UP WITH A FEW MORE MODES SLAPPED ON FOR COOL MEASURE. EVEN OUR RESIDENT DCM EXPERT FOUND IT SOMETHING OF A NON-EVENT. IT'S GOING TO BE A LONG, HARD SLOG...

STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3

Yet another 2D beat-'em-up for your gaming pleasure...



We all knew it would happen sooner or later; only in this case it's sooner.

Virgin have delivered a small

handful of beat-'em-ups, and like I said in my Marvel Vs Capcom review, I doubt we'll ever see an end to them, because the demand's there...

Street Fighter Alpha 3 has already found fame on the PlayStation, and has undergone some small changes for its port to the Dreamcast (as it should). However, you'll no doubt notice those alterations are almost too small to mention. Personally, I hoped Capcom would take the bull by the horns and take advantage of the DC's 3D wizardry. Maybe that would have disgruntled the Street Fighter followers, though.

The graphics look much the same as usual, with a few extra tweaks and improvements to the character animation.

There are game modes; an abundance of them, in fact. There's a total of 11 all

THERE'S AN ABUNDANCE OF GAME MODES...

together, and if you put that with the sheer number of moves you have to learn for each of the 33 characters, you've got a lot of playing time to work with.

Don't forget the different forms of special moves and combos with which you can experiment. These are found by altering the 'ism' you use; there's V-ism, X-ism and Z-ism, which means you can play your game tactically by choosing a different 'ism' to your opponent.

The best mode to conquer is World Tour,

which now makes it possible to power up your favourite character and fight all over the world, constantly building on their attacks, defences and loads of other statistics. At the same time, you can save them onto your VMU and take them into other modes to test against the CPU players.

Street Fighter Alpha 3 will no doubt keep the fans of the genre happy, but me, well, give me Marvel Vs Capcom any day.

VERDICT

So it's a classic with a few extra VR bits included for longevity and all that. However, the moves are hard to pull off, and unless you've got an arcade stick, it won't get any easier. Familiar faces and modes a-plenty, though; the 2D beat-'em-up does well.

6

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The Dreamcast Pad is your only option I'm afraid, but to be honest, nothing else would do the job anyway.

Publisher Available	Infogrames Out Now	Developer Players	General 1-2	Origin Price	UK £39.99	Genre Contact	Racing 0161 827000
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INITIALLY...

SNER MADNESS - MATE, I CAN SEE MYSELF BECOMING BORED AFTER PLAYING THIS FOR AN HOUR. THE CHARACTERS ARE PRETTY CUTE, BUT I'M AFTER A CHALLENGE AND I AIN'T GORNA FIND ONE HERE!

PEN PEN

Artistic licence is a developer's secret weapon and somebody used it to its full extent in this title...

I've come to the conclusion, after many hours of deliberation, that Pen Pen's target market covers both the younger gamers amongst us and those who have a fetish for weird and wonderful titles that are best kept stashed away in a secret location and only bought out after a session down the local.

Those of you who've bought the first two issues of Dreamcast Monthly will already know the basic principles of this game. But for those who haven't (and if not, why not?), Pen Pen involves you choosing from one of seven Pen Pens and racing them over 12 tracks.

However, they don't just simply run around the tracks, they swim, waddle and glide. Swimming and gliding is achieved by pressing the A button regularly. The better you are at timing your Pen Pen's moves, the faster he or she will go.

There isn't a lot of difference between each character's performance. Sparky's quite small

which means he moves a bit faster than the others; however, he's also more susceptible to batters from the other opponents and if you get knocked over, you quickly move down the rankings. Other characters are slow because of their weight and then, of course, you've got your all-rounders.

There are only two game modes to play: Tricleon and two-player versus mode. The Tricleon will take you a long time to complete. The Easy courses are simple enough, and the Middle and Long tracks are merely extensions bolted onto the end of the Easy ones. The only factor that seems to make them more difficult are a few extra obstacles and the other characters becoming experts at bashing you out of their way.

One feature I did like (probably because a) I'm sad and b) I'm a girlie) is the Dress Up

THE PHRASES 'WEIRD' AND 'YOU'LL HAVE TO SEE IT TO BELIEVE IT' BEST DESCRIBE THIS GAME

option. When you come first place in your race you're awarded with an item of clothing or accessories such as a pair of sunglasses or shoes, a mortar board and geeky glasses, biking boots or an indian's feather hat. It's only a comical feature, but it does add another few notches onto the outright barny scale!

I think the phrases 'weird' and 'you'll have to see it to believe it' best describe this game. It's a 'Japanese thing' if you ask me, but only time will tell. ■ ■ ■



COMING SOON...

PEN PEN REALLY IS IN A LEAGUE OF ITS OWN. THE ONLY GAME THAT RESEMBLES ITS CARTOON STYLING IS SOUTH PARK, BUT ARE YOU WANT THE FULL LOW DOWN ON THAT, TAKE A PEAK AT PAGE 16



• Sometimes inputs your program around the Hover Courses



VERDICT
Pen Pen doesn't do the Dreamcast's specifications justice by any means. It's cheery and colourful, but the developer has left out those all-important ingredients that make a hugely playable game.

7

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December 1999

Issue 03

dreamcast 128-BIT TECHNOLOGY • ONLINE GAMES **MONTHLY**

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Tree huggin' hippy crap?



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dreamcast MONTHLY

interview

REACHING FOR

ULTIMATE REALISM

with CRITERION STUDIOS



The Dreamcast's processing prowess allows far more potential for realism than other consoles. That means more licensed games and more real racing data. So what can we look forward to and what are the pitfalls? Criterion's team behind Suzuki Altaise Racing talk tyres and telemetry.

Mike - Artist and Track Designer

DCM How accurately are the bikes and riders recreated?

MIKE We had to clean the advertising back a bit because it just looked messy, but one of the main sponsors was Corona beer, which Sega wouldn't allow anyway. Apart from that it's spot on. We had piles of measured drawings and slides to ensure all the proportions were right. We even had the font they use for the numbers on the back of the bikes.

DCM As an artist, what is the main strength of the Dreamcast?

MIKE The texture compression. You just couldn't do this on the PC because the

amount of texture wouldn't happen. We've got about three times as many textures in there as would be possible on the PC. It's much more detailed and far better quality.

DCM How much more potential for realism does the DC allow?

MIKE Loads. You can go right down to the very smallest stones on a road surface. And even in the distance the graphics stay clean and smooth, instead of getting all spangly and messy.

DCM How much do you think the DC's graphical capabilities have been pushed so far?

MIKE I don't think they've been pushed that far yet. We're currently only using 25 per cent of its maximum capabilities. As more games are made specifically for the Dreamcast and the engine the developers use is more specifically designed for its strengths, we'll get a hell of a lot more out of it.

DCM How did you design the tracks?

MIKE I started off with a simple sketched-out road. Then I raced round it and got to know which corners were too tough and how the gap level felt. Then I altered it as necessary to make the skill element as high as possible. Once I was happy with how it played, I started sketching in surroundings. All the time I had to keep in mind how much was in view and how far you could see.

DCM Is it more enjoyable designing fictional tracks than real ones?

MIKE It's not just more fun to design, it also makes it more playable. You can think purely about what's fun in the game rather than being a slave to realism. Jumps and turbos aren't real, but they are fun and what are games all about?

Alex - Lead programmer

DCM What did your Suzuki research involve?

ALEX First we watched a load of fast bike munter videos to see what we should be aiming at. Then we paid a visit to



ALEX You've not seen anything yet, just the bread and butter. Later on, you'll see some really incredible stuff because Sega is really pushing Naomi and Dreamcast. There'll be incredibly sharp graphics and massive interactivity via the modem. There are infinite alleys to explore.

DCM How did your technology compare with Suzuki's?

ALEX Not very well. Their technology was incredibly advanced, like Formula One stuff. You just can't put everything into the game. They have huge number-crunching laptops working all the time.

DCM So there's still more potential in the information that's available?

ALEX Yes. As technology moves on we can do a lot more with this stuff. If we'd put everything they gave us into the game it would have slowed to a crawl.

DCM As Suzuki Alstare would if you ported it to the PlayStation?

ALEX The game wouldn't work on the PlayStation. Full stop.

Ade - Game Designer

DCM Were you at all nervous about taking on a license?

ADE Yes, licenses have a bad name. They can be really ropey, actually relying on the license and not bothering with much else. But once we'd actually talked to Suzuki I knew we'd be okay. They weren't too imposing and we had very few rules about what we could and couldn't do.

Donnington to watch the World Superbikes. We hung out in the pits and took in everything that happened there. We had lunch with Scott Smart and got some great feedback from the team. On top of that, we read all the magazines and liaised closely with Suzuki because we got everything we needed.

DCM Was there every any friction between you and Suzuki?

ALEX No, they were really hospitable. They sent us reams and reams of information like torque and horsepower graphs, breaking figures and suspension data. All very privileged information. In all, we've fed over 40 parameters into the game including gear ratios, gearboxes, damping, suspension height and mass. The only thing they wouldn't let us do was damage the bikes or the riders. But we didn't really want that anyway because at the speed the bikes race, one crash and it would all be over.

DCM How much further can the Dreamcast be taken?



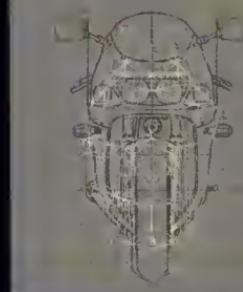
can push a lot more data around. If people are looking for realism, then the Dreamcast is where they need to go.

DCM What aspect of the game are you most proud of?

ADE The speed, without a doubt. Just being able to rocket through a city. It's all about adrenaline and split-second timing.

DCM How far has that element been taken forward by the Dreamcast?

ADE Loads. If you look at previous consoles, speed has been maintained at great expense to geometry, whereas we've combined both. We've got great environments, high-resolution textures and very complex models within a really fast game. And that's all down to the sheer power of the Dreamcast. Of course the pad's great as well. Our game supports analogic steering, breaking and acceleration. That's a big step forward.



WE WATCHED A LOAD OF BIKE NUTTER VIDEOS TO SEE WHAT WE SHOULD BE AIMING AT. THEN WE PAID A VISIT TO DONNINGTON TO WATCH THE WORLD SUPERBIKES

DCM How important is the growing collaboration between racing game developers and their real life counterparts?

ADE Well there's definitely some sort of merge going on. Within a few years people really will be able to take one of their favourite cars out for a spin. Developers are being seen much less as subversive marketing media and given far more credibility. Obviously, the Dreamcast is the most powerful console on Earth and you

DCM What kind of game would you like to produce next?

ADE If I could do anything I wanted, it would be a game set inside a human body. Inner Space style. You'd come across a big pumping heart and have to fight off all the antibodies.

WATCH THIS SPACE. BUT WHILE YOU'RE WAITING, FLICK TO PAGE 68-69 FOR OUR IN-DEPTH REVIEW.



SEGA RALLY 2

All Cars

At the title screen press \diamond \diamond \diamond \diamond [B] [A]
 \diamond [B] [B] on the digital control pad.

Access All Years

At the title screen press \diamond \diamond \diamond \diamond [B]
[AI] [B] \diamond \diamond on the digital pad.

New Car Design

Hold down the left trigger button when selecting the Lancia Stratos, Corolla WRC or Lancer Evolution to access an alternate set of colours for that car.

Secret Cars

Renault Maxi Megane: Finish Arcade Mode

Subaru Impreza 555: Finish first on the 1st year

Mitsubishi Lancer EVO 4: Finish first on 2nd year

Toyota Celica GT-Four ST-



Play as Alphabet Character

Highlight Akira, press START, highlight Leon, press START, highlight Pal, press [A].

Play against an Alphabet Character

Highlight Akira, press START, highlight Lau, press START, highlight Pal, press [A].

Play as Dural
 You must be in Training Mode and when choosing your character, press START and [X] and [A] at the same time for silver Dural or press START and [Y] and [A] at the same time for golden Dural.



VIRTUA FIGHTER 3tb

Arcade Backgrounds

In Training, Normal or Team Battle
 Mode you can alter the backgrounds to the original arcade versions by hitting the time on out in the Stage Select screen.

TRICK STYLE Quick Start

Press the R button when 3, 2 and 1 appear, respectively, then press and hold it when GO comes up. If done right you'll go into a spin similar to the Y-button trick, allowing you to start quicker than if you merely take three steps before getting on your board.

HYDRO THUNDER Secret Track

From the track select screen, highlight Lake Powell and tap the view button three times. The secret track should replace Lake Powell.

BUGGY HEAT Bonus Colours
 Beat the game on Expert mode to gain an extra colour scheme for your buggy.

Beelzebub

Beat Expert in first place to unlock the Beelzebub Buggy. It's a very fast, but difficult to control buggy (no different to the rest of them, then).



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Shotoku Highway

Bottle

Samic Adventure

Saul Calibur

Street Fighter 3

Street Fighter Alpha

Super Speed Roding

TNN Motorsports

Hardcore Heat

Trickstyle

Virtuo Fighter 3tb

A Life

Aero Dencing featuring Blue Impulse

Air Force Delta

Blue Stinger

Buggy Heat

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Daytona USA 2

Dynamite Deko

Elemental Gimmick Gear

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On import

Even though the country is going Dreamcast-mad and English titles are being released by the lorry-load, we all still want to know what to expect in the near future... So here's what the Japanese are playing and our verdict on each.

Climax Landers

Publisher	Sega	Developer	Climax
Genre	RPG	Price	£54.99

There's quite a lot of hype surrounding this RPG, mostly down to the fact that Climax has produced some cool RPGs in the past, including Landstalker for the Sega Genesis.

If any of you remember this particular game then you may be pleased to know that



Pop 'n Music 2

Publisher	Konami	Developer	Bemani
Genre	Puzzle	Price	£54.99

There isn't a great deal of difference between the first Pop 'n Music and this, its sequel. The game comes from the same strand of genre as the likes of Um Jammer Lammy and Pa Rappa the Rappa, only in my opinion, it's not quite as likeable. The general idea is to press the appropriate buttons on your pad at the same time as the notes disappear at the bottom of the chords on the screen.

Before you start your game you have to choose whether you want to play a five-, seven- or nine-button game; the lower the number, the easier it is. If you want to know which button you have to press for which chord, take a look at your VMU screen and memorise them as well as you can.

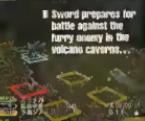
If you're new to this game, I recommend you start at the beginner's level where you

Climax Landers borrows one or two gameplay elements from it.

The storyline to Climax Landers is intriguing to say the least. The game's world is mixed together with bits and pieces of mysterious lands which range from the medieval years to modern times. Why this world was created and by whom is unknown.

A young boy named Sword is summoned into the world and is greeted by an old man called The Hero. He claims that the young fighter has been chosen to solve the riddle of the world's creation,

ALL THE CONVENTIONS YOU WOULD EXPECT TO FIND IN AN RPG ARE ACCOUNTED FOR



SCORE

8

so Sword sets off on his journey to discover the land's secrets. You control several characters in the game, but to begin with you play as Sword himself.

As you can understand, playing an RPG on import is by no means an easy task. If you don't already know the storyline and who's who, you've got no chance of working them out, that is unless you can read Japanese.

Due to the power of the Dreamcast, the graphics in this game look stunning. You begin the game in a creepy castle and all you have to do is find your way out, killing the odd monster along the way. The battle scenes are turn-based and your attacks take the form of spells. You've got your usual RPG stats (HP, MP and Stamina) and as you gain level-ups, your opponents get smarter and their attacks stronger.

All the conventions you'd expect to find in an RPG are accounted for, so those of you who love the genre can look forward to its release over here; and as soon as it arrives you can expect its review in DCM.

can choose from 10 different tunes. Some are a lot harder than others, but in Arcade Mode you only have to clear two stages to complete the level. The same goes for all the difficulty settings. Once you get past Beginner and Normal you start the real challenge set by Excite and Party. These are ridiculously hard, the music's fast and the chords disappear every now and again leaving you to guess which notes are where, plus they move around the screen just to complicate matters, so one minute you think you have to press the X button, but the next minute it moves to a completely different chord. It's hard to explain - you'll see.

After about half an hour I couldn't decide whether the game was becoming more addictive or I was getting increasingly frustrated with myself; perhaps they're the same thing. Once you get used to which button means which chord you begin to get the hang of it, I can only recommend practice.



SCORE

6



Written By Matt Leppard
matt@quaynet.co.uk

NEXT ISSUE: PART 2

The best places to go online
and how to get there...

It's here and it's got Net access. Trouble is, you don't know where to go or how to get there... Let us take your little hands and guide you in our ongoing online series. Part II - what is the Net?

GLOSSARY

BROWSER - software that allows you to see the Web. It receives information via http and interprets this to show text, pictures and animation.

DIAL-UP/DIAL-OUT - when you connect to the Internet, your Dreamcast actually dials a telephone number; this is what dial-up refers to. The modem then allows information to be exchanged between the console and the server.

E-MAIL - electronic mail, another part of the Internet.

FAQ - frequently asked questions. Often used on Web sites, these give users information about a site or service.

FLASH - a programming language that allows you to see nifty animation and sound on Web sites.

FTP - file transfer protocol. Largely irrelevant to Dreamcast users, ftp is another means of exchanging information over the Internet.

IRC - Internet relay chat. A method of

message exchange that is both quicker and simpler than e-mail.

HTML - hyper-text mark-up language. Code used to write Web pages.

JAVA - a programming system used to bring more interactivity to Web pages.

LINK/HYPERLINK - part of a Web page which, if clicked, moves you to another part of the same site or another part of the Net.

MODEM - stands for Modulator/Demodulator. This handy device handles information so N can pass down phone lines.

NET - abbreviation of Internet. Think of INTER-connected NETWORK and you've got it. The Net is actually a collection of PCs, servers, cables and phone lines - and now Dreamcasts, of course. Not to be confused with the World-wide Web.

OPERATING SYSTEM - think of how Windows allows you to control a PC; this is an operating system. Without this, PCs are pretty dull and endless. Other systems include Mac OS, Unix and Linex.

PLUG-INS - simple add-ons to your browser that give it extra functionality.

PROTOCOL - a language that facilitates communication between computers.

REALPLAYER - a plug-in that allows you to see movies and hear music on Web sites.

SEARCH ENGINE/DIRECTORY - Web sites that allow you to search for other Web sites.

SERVER - a computer with a massive memory, used to store files and serve them up to remote computers - or Dreamcasts.

URL - uniform resource locator. Don't worry about the jargon, this is just the technical name for a Web site address.

WEB - abbreviation of World-wide Web, the graphical face of the Net. Devised by Brit physicist Tim Berners-Lee in the late '80s, it uses the hyper-text transfer protocol (http://) to transfer images, programs and text. Before the Web, the Net was text-based.

I've been using the Net for about five years now. In that time, I've seen it all. done it all, sent e-mails, downloaded programs and movies, paid for stuff, not paid for stuff I should have, received viruses, deleted viruses, played games online, and - last but not least - learned a thing or two. Easy, in fact, you might say easy-peasy lemon squeezy. If you were sad.

Easy is an easy word to say, though. I still get frustrated when I find a Web site is offline, or when my browser crashes, but it's nothing to the head-in-hands, teeth-clenching misery of all those years ago. The violence and language I subjected my PC to would make even Channel 4 think again about doing a docu on my life. But I'm better now, and so is the Net.

Right. So where does the Dreamcast fit in to all this? Well, if you've got one, you're holding in your hands a Net-ready PC to all intents and purposes. Okay, so you can't do word-processing on it, or number-crunch a spreadsheet, but who gives a monkey's banana? You bought it for games, and the Web browsing ability are handy add-ons, right? Right. But in order to use the Net, you're going to need to know what it is, what it all means and what we're talking about when we say dial-out number and server capacity. Welcome to Part 1 of our ongoing series on using the Dreamcast online. This issue, we've compiled an essential glossary of Net terms to get you started and a useful list of FAQs. What? You don't know what FAQs are? Better check our glossary, then...





SITE SEER

This issue, something a little different - rather than loads more Dreamcast sites, here are a few essential Web pages to get you going. Remember, next issue, we'll take an in-depth look at how you can use the Internet capabilities of the Dreamcast to their best advantage and how to save online time and money.

What's

What's.com
<http://www.whatis.com>



Confused by coaxial cables? Flummoxed by file names?

This online techie dictionary is indispensable if you want to learn more about technology, and the Internet in general.



One of the early (1990) prototype Web browsers - this from the Web 'Inventor' Tim Berners-Lee of the WWW Consortium (www.w3.org).



Yahoo! (<http://www.yahoo.com>), one of the best Web searchers, as displayed today on Internet Explorer.

UK Plus

<http://www.ukplus.com>

The best Web site directory for the UK - if it ain't here, it ain't online, or probably, anyway. Easy-to-use and quick, this should be your first port of call if you're looking for something UK-related.



The Sonic Foundation

<http://www.sonicfoundation.org/>

The best site for the small, blue hedgehog. Includes fan fiction, fan art, downloads and even online comics. Supersonic indeed!



The 1994 version of Netscape Navigator, the most popular browser before Microsoft's Internet Explorer started strangling competitors.



The Dreamcast does away with the idea of a separate keyboard - closer to the vision Bill Gates had of a future where information will come via a black box connected to your TV.

FAQs

Q. OK, so I've got the Web and e-mail with my Dreamcast, but the Web's full of porn, isn't it?

A. There's certainly adult content on the Net, but the Dreamcast comes with built-in filters for this type of stuff. It's possible to disable this, although we're not going to show you how just yet!

Q. What about all the multimedia stuff? I've heard about Shockwave, QuickTime, Java and the like... Will my Dreamcast be able to play films and animation?

A. The Dreamcast software supports Flash, JavaScript and RealPlayer, so yes.

Q. I've heard about people racking up monolithic phone bills on the Net. If I get really involved in a game, will I end up selling my Dreamcast, car and house just to pay off BT?

A. The Dreamcast service is charged at local rates. You can maximise savings by finding the dial-out number (see next issue) and putting it as your best-friend number on your Friends and Family discount schema.

Q. If I use the Net to browse, buy stuff, or send e-mail, all sorts of hockers and nasties will be able to see where I've been, what I've been doing, and any details I may have given, won't they?

A. Yes and no. First, browsing is pretty anonymous, although all Web servers have logs which record who's visited their site (recorded as what is known as an IP address - the location of your PC on the Net, rather than your actual e-mail or postal address). E-mail is pretty safe, despite recent high-profile hacking cases - how safe do you think your post is? And if a shopping site uses a secure server, any credit card information you give will be securely coded so no-one can intercept it. Far safer then giving details over the phone...

Q. Web site addresses are so hard to remember. Why do they have to have all those colons and slashes in them?

A. Ahhh, this old chestnut. Loads of people mock Web URLs, banging on about slashes, dots and colons, but there's no mystery. Think of a postal address - you need house number, street, postcode and so on. It's no different to that.



interview

PURE GENIUS

PURE GENIUS

ARCHER MACLEAN



With Jimmy White's 2: Cueball unleashed onto Dreamcast this month, we decided to spend some time with the man behind the balls, Mr Archer Maclean...

Walking into the home of Awesome Developments, creator of Jimmy White's 2: Cueball, the one thing I was absolutely certain I'd see would be a snooker or pool table. What I wasn't quite ready for was the mountain of

game that takes up 100Mb of hard drive space onto a console is hard work!.

But this isn't just any console. This is the latest, all-singing, all-dancing baby from Sega. How much trouble can that be? "The DC itself is an amazing machine, capable of some superb stuff.

done in just over seven weeks". A credit to the ease-of-use of the format, perhaps? "No", he says, "a credit to a fantastic team".

The Cult of Maclean

Maclean is one of that elite band of programmers whose name adorns the box, and certainly throughout his 17-year involvement with the industry, he's experienced many highlights. From the early beginnings with International Karate + and Dropzone, he went on to win Programmer of the Year at the start of the '90s.

"I had absolutely no idea it was going to be me," he says, "I just went to the ceremony because I thought it was a good freebie. When they read out my name, I stood up so fast I sent everything flying and spent the first few seconds clearing up the mess. I then went on the stage where Jonathan Ross was presenting the awards, and remember asking him why his finger was bent". And what did he say? "He shut it in the door as a kid, or something like that".

THE DREAMCAST ITSELF IS AN AMAZING MACHINE, CAPABLE OF SOME SUPERB STUFF

empty Coke cans that were sitting on top of it. "That's how much coke we drink in a week", beamed industry legend Archer Maclean. It's a wonder they ever sleep.

Mind you, they won't have had much sleep lately as the small Banbury-based outfit has been busy converting the widely acclaimed PC game to the consoles. "It would have been easier if we'd written the console versions first", concedes Maclean, "because trying to cram a PC

Unfortunately, Microsoft's Windows CE system (which the team used to bring the game across) takes up most of the 16Mb working space, leaving us about 4Mb to play with". So did it take long to convert? "Well we had a bit of an emergency situation and had to get the game done by a certain date. Everyone in the company concentrated their efforts on getting it out, and we all had a lot of very late nights. In the end, we got the conversion

MACLEAN HAS CONSISTENTLY SHOWN THAT HE'S WILLING TO ADD LITTLE EXTRAS AND A LOT OF POLISH TO MAKE HIS TITLES UNIQUE

doubts how good the Dreamcast can be, take a look at those two games and tell me if the PlayStation is better". The man's got a point.

Will you be supporting the Dreamcast in the future? "We don't have distinct plans right now, but it's certainly an option on our two upcoming projects".

Fun and Games

We can't have an interview with Archer Maclean without talking about the little quirks that seem to infest his games. "It's my trademark", he declares of the variety of extra subgames and distractions you can find by exploring the Cueball world. He's not kidding. Whether it's fighters dropping their trousers in International Karate + back in the 80s, or snooker

balls pulling faces at you in the first snooker title, Maclean has consistently shown that he's willing to add little extras and lots of polish to make his titles unique.

"In the early days, people never really thought about doing it," he says, "but now others are catching on, we keep having to come up with new things of our own". Don't publishers ever get tired of your antics? "We occasionally come up against a cold-hearted executive who doesn't get it, but we're fortunate this time round to have a good bunch of people". It's a good job really. How else would we get a lottery number generator in the middle of a snooker and pool title?

Whiter than White

And so finally to Jimmy. Where does Mr White fit in? "He gave us more help on the first one where we needed it the most, and he does a lot of PR work for us. Actually," muses Mr Maclean, "I've haven't seen him for a couple of months now. I'm supposed to go round and fix his daughter's computer".

And there you have it. Archer Maclean, former Programmer of the Year, and personal computer technician to none other than Jimmy White himself. What a man...

Accuracy Rating

Perhaps the most impressive facet of Cueball is the feeling of accuracy of the whole thing. So I had to ask the question, didn't I? Just how much complex maths was involved? Electing to avoid the verbal answer, Maclean simply walked into the next room and pulled out a book packed with the kind of calculations that child prodigies usually produce. "I had to relearn a lot of A-level maths when we did the first snooker game, and we've carried over the work we did then. Why fix it if it ain't broke?" Not just an excuse to get out of some more maths homework then?

But how can you test if something is right? "Jimmy White was quite helpful in that sense. He's no mathematician, but he instinctively knows what the balls should do when hit in a certain way. The other way is to work out if it simply feels right".

And the Dreamcast?

So what does an industry veteran think about Sega's new baby? Any games that have caught your eye? "We like House of the Dead 2 with the light gun - so simple, so straightforward, and technically it's stunning", says Maclean. He was even more pleased when I told him how to turn the extra gore on. "And Soul Calibur is outstanding technically, too. If anyone ever

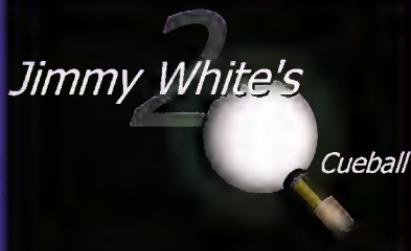


ARCHER MACLEAN INTERVIEW

awesome developments

"Back in 1993, all of my so-called contemporaries were off setting up their own companies, and they all told me that I should too. I resisted for many years, and maybe that's why it took me three years to write the first Snooker game". And so inevitably Archer Maclean assembled a team of talented individuals to set about putting together Jimmy White's 2: Cueball. "People have worked on my games before, but this was the first game I had done with a proper team".

The company is currently in the early stages of Cueball 3 - "we started it yesterday," Archer cheerfully proclaims - which will see the entire code (including the maths) rewritten from scratch. And then there's a top-secret, major project that they're working on at the moment. But he wouldn't tell me anything about that. Meenle.



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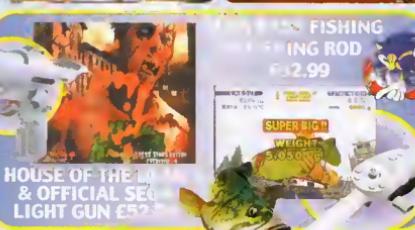
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THE O FILES THE TRUTH IS IN HERE!

With potential Dreamcast owners eager to know what the general consensus is regarding Sega's new machine, we at Dreamcast Monthly felt it our duty to hold a 'virtual audience' with some of the computer industry's most powerful players. We spoke to the leading publishers, new development teams and high-flying MDs in quest for all the answers.

Sega's great white hope? The truth is in here thanks to Dave Perry at Shiny Entertainment, Gavin Cheshire at Silicon Dreams, Peter Bilotta at Interplay/Virgin Interactive, Kevin Shaw at Eutechxw, Gary Bracey, ex-Dean, Robert Kaack at Gigawatt Studio, Sergei Klimov at Snowball Interactive and Massimiliano Socchi at Pixelsoft Games.



THE US HAS HAD A FANTASTIC START BECAUSE, QUITE FRANKLY, SOFTWARE THAT LOOKS AS GOOD AS NFL 2000 WILL DRIVE THE BUYERS

How important are first impressions? Could it be love at first sight, or has Sega got an uphill struggle on their hands?

Gavin Cheshire: When the Saturn launched way back in '95, Sega was strong competition for Sony who came along with little experience of the market and little software to support their machine. I believe Sega underestimated Sony's ability to market a piece of hardware coupled with the fact that Sega too had little software to support their machine. For developers, the Saturn was harder to work on than PSX and didn't quite have the same power. It also came out at exactly the same time.

The Dreamcast has a full 12 months' head start over Sony and this time it has some formidable software to support the machine. The US has had a fantastic start because, quite frankly, software that looks as good as NFL 2000 will drive the buyers. The Dreamcast is also a cheap way to get on the Internet. It comes with a keyboard and eventually there will be a hard drive or other similar data storage device, so it will be a great deal cheaper than a PC. The final positive point for the Dreamcast is that it's very easy to develop games for.

Peter Bilotta: The Dreamcast's the first machine in the next generation of game consoles. In terms of the technical specifications that Sega first



■ **Peter Bilotta**
Company: Interplay

...IT REALLY SHOWED THE WAY FORWARD IN TERMS OF WHERE ENTERTAINMENT SOFTWARE SHOULD BE GOING

announced, it really showed the way forward in terms of where entertainment software should be going. Most important of all is that it will allow many new users to gain access, for the first time, to online gaming. Sega MUST get this right. In terms of marketing, I think Sega has learnt a lot from the Saturn and PSX experience. They company has been more pro-active and has therefore gained stronger support from developers to provide an initial line-up of top-quality products. They have a window of opportunity before the PSX 2 comes, and they MUST maximise this.

With the power within the box itself, Dreamcast owners are able to get their hands on superior products that are comparable with high-specification PCs. The raw power of the hardware leaves all the existing consoles standing - for the moment at least.

Gary Bracey: When it was first announced, it seemed the Dreamcast was going to be the 'PlayStation Beater' and everyone got very excited. Subsequently, though, Sony's announcement of the PSX 2 has somewhat overshadowed the impact of Dreamcast. The specifications now seem to be a little less impressive in light of Sony's and Nintendo's next-generation machines. However, it's the software that counts. If Sega can deliver a number of 'killer' games, then it has 12 months to create a decent market share and give Sony a run for its money. Sega has done a fairly good job with marketing the machine, although there's a lot of ground to make up if it wants to erase the memory of the Saturn!

Dave Perry: The Dreamcast's got a stupid logo; I keep seeing it on shower curtains, coffee advertisements and socks. Maybe that's the plan, to let the rest of the world advertise the logo for them. The joypad's OK, but the convex joystick's a dumb idea. Some of the games are yuck - I was bored of Blue Stinger and Sonic in about 10 minutes. Yes, I know Soul Calibur is good. The hardware... now the

hardware is cool and the potential is excellent. I'm looking forward to some really great games. The Internet option is weak to say the least. You need a printer, hard drive, keyboard, mouse, floppy drive, Flash and Java to really use the Web these days, not a convex joystick. The multiplayer option...? Fan-bloody-tastic, but where are the games?

Kevin Shaw: The thing to remember about the Dreamcast is that it's now out. Regardless of whether it's 'under powered' compared with PlayStation 2 or the Dolphin, it exists and is available to buy. The other thing is, it's the games



■ **Sergei Klimov**
Company: Snowball Interactive

DREAMCAST IS RIGHT HERE AND RIGHT NOW, AND WHILE THE PSX2 OR DOLPHIN ARE A GOOD PR SUBJECT, THEY'RE NOT A REALITY YET

that make the console. If you look at the PlayStation compared with the N64, you can see that Sony's machine isn't as powerful, yet it's a more popular console because of the variety and number of games available. If Sega can fulfil its promise of a new game every week, and the quality of the games remain high, then the machine could stand a good chance.

Robert Knaack: Before we actually got to play one, we read the specs and were mildly impressed. It has some nice technical features. Having some teams that work on PC games, we were very interested when Microsoft said they were going to support DirectX (under Windows CE) on the Dreamcast. This is great for PC developers and Sega because a lot of companies can get up and running relatively quickly (and inexpensively). This is in contrast to the PlayStation 2, which is a different beast altogether and wants a much different engine design.

DMC First impressions are one thing, but does the Dreamcast have what it takes to succeed (let alone survive) in this cut-throat business?

Kevin Shaw: As I said before, if Sega can deliver on its promise of a game a week and if the level of games remains as high (and from some of the other titles I've seen, I can't see why it won't), I think Sega could be onto a winner. I've always had a soft spot for Sega as I was really into my MegaDrive years ago and I'd like to see some of those classics getting a new lick of paint!

Robert Knaack: Absolutely. You look at the PlayStation 1 or N64 and they look tired compared with the sharper, snappier graphics on the Dreamcast. I think NFL 2000, Power Stone, Sonic, Ready 2 Rumble, Hydro Thunder and Soul Calibur are all great games. A console has never released this many 'A' titles on launch.

They have Half-Life, Rainbow Six, Star Wars Episode 1: Racer, Shenmue, MDK 2, NBA 2K, Castlevania, Resident Evil: Code Veronica and Wrestling coming out within a year. Those are some pretty heavy hitters in the gaming business. It's the magic question. If the game publishers think it will succeed, you'll see an avalanche of games for the Dreamcast next year. So the real question is: can Sega get a big enough customer base before next year to ensure its longevity? I don't know who's going to win, but either way the consumer will benefit. Sony, Sega, get ready to rumble...

Sergei Klimov: Yes, the Dreamcast's already received tremendous PR here in Russia

through the console editors of Gameland. Can you imagine the balls it took for these people to dedicate 10-15 pages per issue of their multi-platform magazine to a console that would never be officially launched in Russia until a few years into the next millennium? But our key impression from **Dreamcast** so far has been in the things that we haven't seen done before. There's a lot of potential in the machine in terms of genres and specifically multi-genre adventure/RPGs that had certain difficulties on the PSX, even despite the brilliant work of Square and Konami. I don't know yet if this is something we perceive as a team with a unique standpoint in terms of genre evolution, or if these are the possibilities that other teams are already working on.

As a console with a certain genre appeal that would be owned by more than a half of current PSX owners, yes. As the ultimate mass-market machine that would keep these people from buying into PSX 2, no, as there's not enough time to build the content the PSX already has. Sega will need its own Sonic with breasts [Lara Croft - Ed] and its own Final Fantasy - these are particularly strong on the A lot of folks out there would go out and buy a PSX 2 rather than wait for half a year until

Bill Dunn, Perk
Entechnix, Entechnix.com

Final Fantasy XIII lands on their PCs. **Massimiliano Sacchi:** As a player and a developer, I really hope it will. Sega has got good cards in their hand, a great system (by today's standards), some fantastic games and full support from the trade. They're hitting the right targets with the potential buyers as well. I would just suggest that Sega doesn't get arrogant and underestimate the power of Sony.

Dave Perry: I love Sega and so do a lot of other people. The public's also begging for something NEW, and the timing of the **Dreamcast**'s perfect. I just think it's gonna be a short love affair the way things are going. If you see Shiny making games for it in the future, then you'll know we're fully behind it!

PCM So the general consensus on **Dreamcast** is relatively clear, but what of the impending battle of the giants? Will Sega be David to Sony's Goliath? And what about Nintendo?

Peter Bilotta: Technically, the **Dreamcast** has the potential to leave the old PSX behind, although there's an immense installed base there which gamers may be loathed to abandon just yet. I still believe there must be a few doubts over the £200 price point of the **Dreamcast**: cheap given what it offers the gamer, yet still, is this low enough? If it follows the norm of hardware prices decreasing with time, though, maybe it will be about correct. As for the PlayStation 2, who would be brave enough to bet against Sony? There's a certain shroud of mystery about the system until developers get their hands on development kits and that time's still a long way off for Europe, although sitting here today we could probably safely say it will sell 75 million units worldwide. If Sega gets it right, **Dreamcast** will at least have had a good shot by then.

Gary Bracey: There is a hard-core of gamers who will buy anything and everything. These are also people who have strong influences on the market generally. If Sega and the games publishers manage to impress these decision makers, then that will hold well for the future of the **Dreamcast**. Attention will certainly be redirected towards the PSX 2, especially as the launch date gets closer. Sega is going to have to come up with some compelling diversion tactics!

Kevin Shaw: You can buy a **Dreamcast** now. PlayStation 2 won't be available until next year and I think that's a reasonable window for the **Dreamcast** to build up a lot of support. I know

THE DAYS OF PEOPLE ONLY OWNING ONE SYSTEM ARE BECOMING A THING OF THE PAST

a lot of PlayStation owners who're waiting for PlayStation 2, but just as many are considering a **Dreamcast**. The thing is, the market IS big enough for both consoles and I think the days of people only owning one system are becoming a thing of the past.

Massimiliano Sacchi: As for the 32-bit PlayStation, you can't touch it. At £80 it appeals to a different market and I guess that many people will rather invest their £200 in a PSX (trendy, with a huge catalogue of titles and some fantastic games) with a lot of games rather than having a blind date with Sega. The PlayStation 2 is at least 12 months away, we don't know much about hardware specs and some speculation suggests the retail price could be higher than £200. By the time PSX 2 is released in Europe and USA, the **Dreamcast** may well have a strong installed base and a £150 (if not lower) price-point. Sony will have to fight hard if they want to repeat the PSX's success.

Sergei Klimov: I think **Dreamcast** is right here and right now, and while the PSX 2 or Dolphin are a good PR subject, they're not a reality yet. Moreover, the installed base of PSX right now is good enough for a few more years to come. Why risk the ridiculous cost of the development for PSX 2 when, in fact, until 2003 you won't be selling neither more, nor higher than your average PSX title? I don't think there's any chance EA would withstand their current non-involvement issue. EA is a public company and the pressure from investors will be building even higher over the next few months.



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